September · 1929

THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE



A New Love Story
by Katharine Brush [who wrote "Glitter"]

"Today's Youth"
by Jesse Lynch Williams

Sophie Kerr
Sam Hellman
Roland Pertwee
Achmed Abdullah
Margaret Culkin Banning
Bernard de Voto
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Raleigh
Cigarettes





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Gum troubles start in the dining room. Modern soft foods rob gums of work. Circulation grows languid. Tissues become tender and inflamed. Resistance to infection is lowered. Gingivitis, Vincent's disease and even pyorrhea often get their start in just this way.

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Real cleanliness makes friends everywhere

Our friends choose us just as we choose them now-a-days . . . not because we happen to live next door, but because we are the kind of people they really want to know.

And what suggests most plainly the sort of people we are? Does anything count more than cleanliness? . . . or the lack of it?

Mothers know how true this is



Every mother knows, when she stops to think of it, that *she sets the standard of cleanliness* for *all* her family. Of course it's a responsibility. But isn't it an opportunity as well? . . . a chance for her to help decide in no small fashion and in a *hundred* little ways, the friends they'll make, the fun they'll have, and the successes . . . individually, and as a family?

You can't expect them to



Children only want to play, eat, play. But they must learn to play, *wash*, eat, play, *wash*.

You know the saying, "As the twig is bent, the tree's inclined." By example and direction, mother, first of all, must be a good twig bender.

Then there's father



Does father get a fresh, clean change of clothes every morning? . . . and his fair chance at the tub or shower? He should. Someone should *see* that he does. Never before has real cleanliness been so important to the man who wants to get ahead.

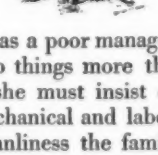
It's really rather astonishing



Mother should be an *expert* in this matter of cleanliness . . . in scheduling it for the family . . . and in achieving it, efficiently. For think how much of her job has to do with nothing else: baths for baby; bathing and handwashing regulations for the older children (to say nothing of face-washing); clean clothes, plenty of them, for everybody; a clean house for everyone; clean towels, clean sheets, clean table-linen, clean dishes, clean food.

It's the very essence of mother's work, real cleanliness . . . and has enormously to do with the health, happiness and success of every *one* of us!

Two things more . . . very important



To never quite *catch up* with cleanliness, in your home or with respect to your *own* appearance, is to be thought of as a poor manager.

So there are two things more that mother must do: she must insist on having all the mechanical and labor-saving aids to cleanliness the family can afford; and she must demand time for her own daily bath, for keeping her hands and hair nice, her complexion clear, her clothes always fresh and attractive.

♥ ♥ ♥

Real cleanliness does make friends everywhere, and for everyone. And like so many other of the substantial things in life, real cleanliness begins at home . . . is engineered by mother.

Published by the Association of American Soap and Glycerine Producers, Inc., to aid the work of CLEANLINESS INSTITUTE, *45 East 17th Street, New York.*

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VOL. LIII, NO. 5 Published monthly. On sale the 12th of each month preceding date of issue. SEPTEMBER, 1929

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CHANGE OF ADDRESS: Notification regarding change of subscriber's address must reach us four weeks in advance of the next day of issue.

ADVERTISING FORMS close on the 3rd of the second preceding month (November forms close September 3rd). Advertising rates on application.

THE CONSOLIDATED MAGAZINES CORPORATION, Publisher, The Red Book Magazine, 36 So. State Street, Chicago, Ill.

CHARLES M. RICHTER, *Vice-President* — LOUIS ECKSTEIN, *President* — RALPH K. STRASSMAN, *Vice-President*

Office of the Director of Advertising, 420 Lexington Avenue, New York City, N. Y.
LONDON OFFICES, 6 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, London, W. C.
Entered as second-class matter April 25, 1905, at the post office at Chicago, Illinois, under the Act of Congress of March 3, 1879.
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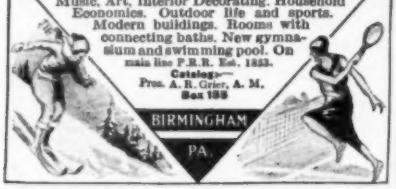
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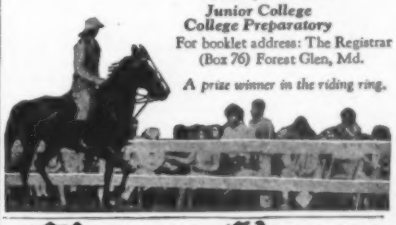


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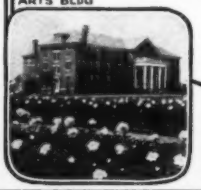
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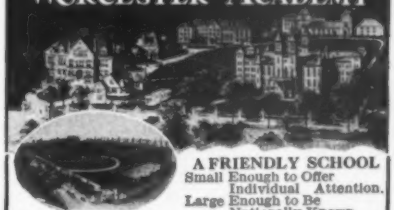
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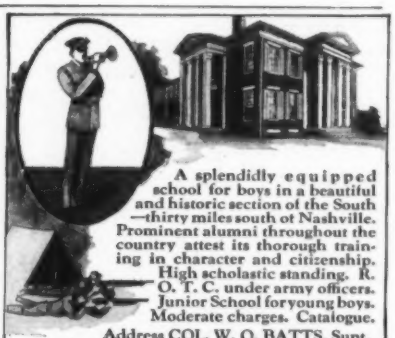


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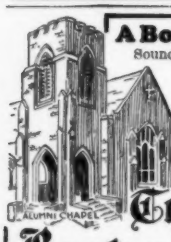


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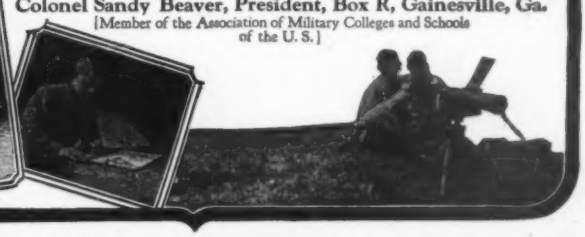
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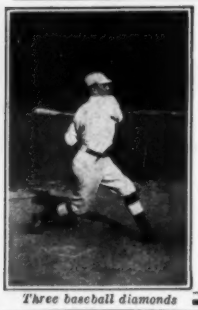
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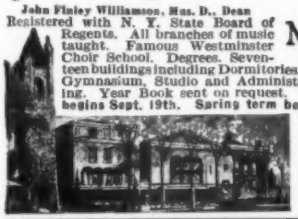
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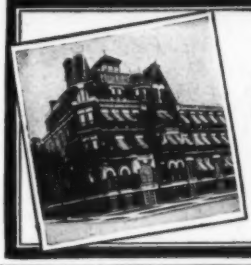
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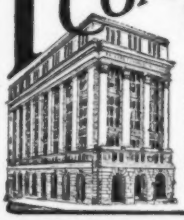
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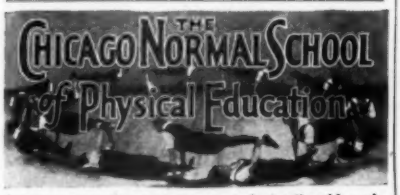
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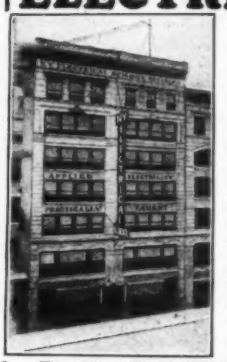


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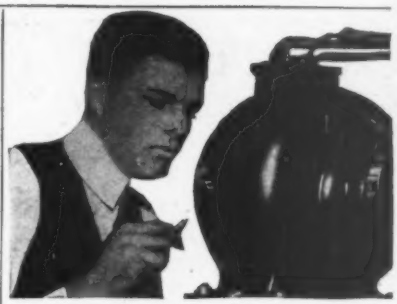
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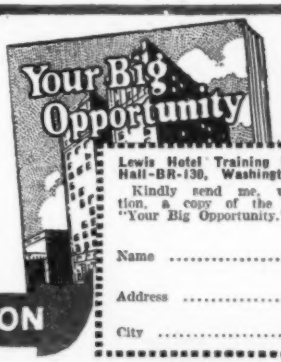
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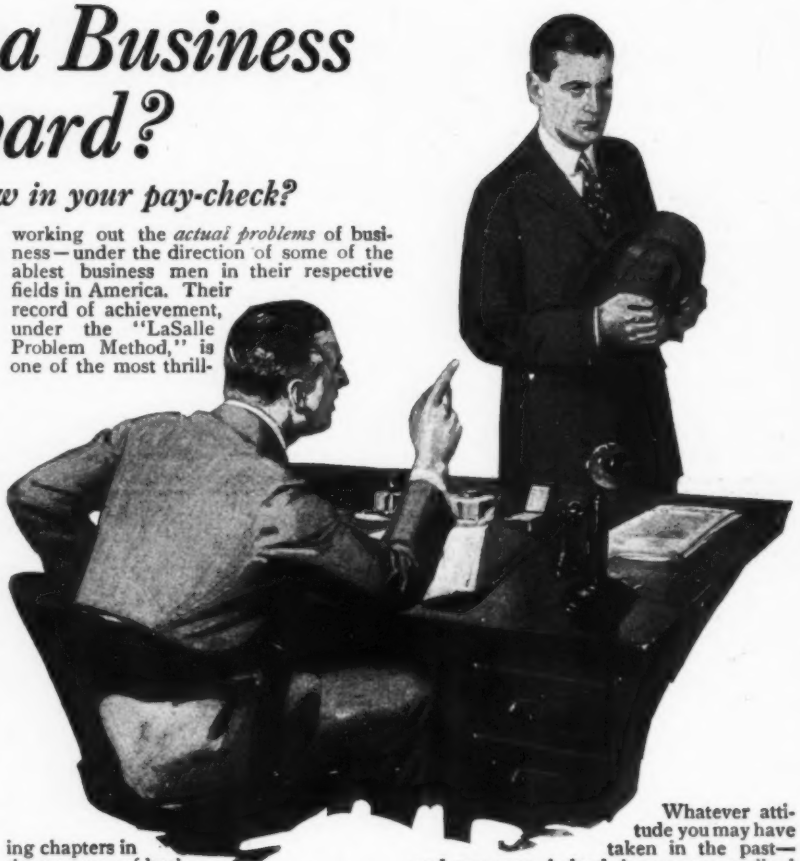
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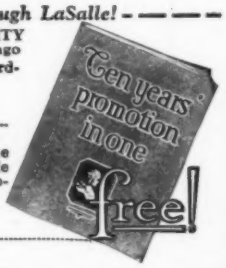
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I would welcome full particulars regarding opportunities in

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(State subject in which you are interested)

Please send me your book on the training indicated, outline of LaSalle plan, and a copy of "Ten Years' Promotion in One"—all entirely free.



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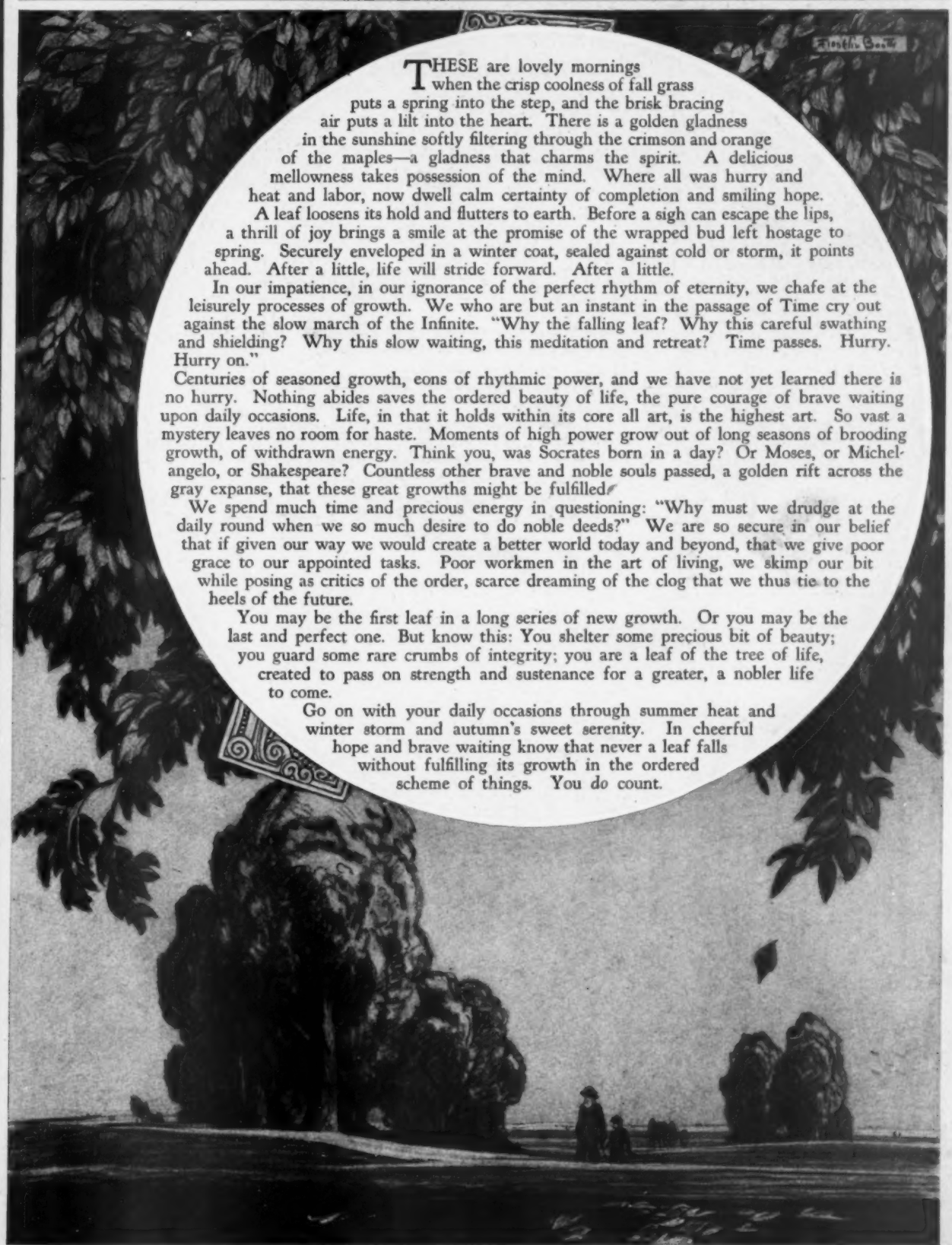
Address .....



By Angelo Patri

You Do Count

Decoration by Franklin Booth



THESE are lovely mornings when the crisp coolness of fall grass puts a spring into the step, and the brisk bracing air puts a lilt into the heart. There is a golden gladness in the sunshine softly filtering through the crimson and orange of the maples—a gladness that charms the spirit. A delicious mellowness takes possession of the mind. Where all was hurry and heat and labor, now dwell calm certainty of completion and smiling hope. A leaf loosens its hold and flutters to earth. Before a sigh can escape the lips, a thrill of joy brings a smile at the promise of the wrapped bud left hostage to spring. Securely enveloped in a winter coat, sealed against cold or storm, it points ahead. After a little, life will stride forward. After a little.

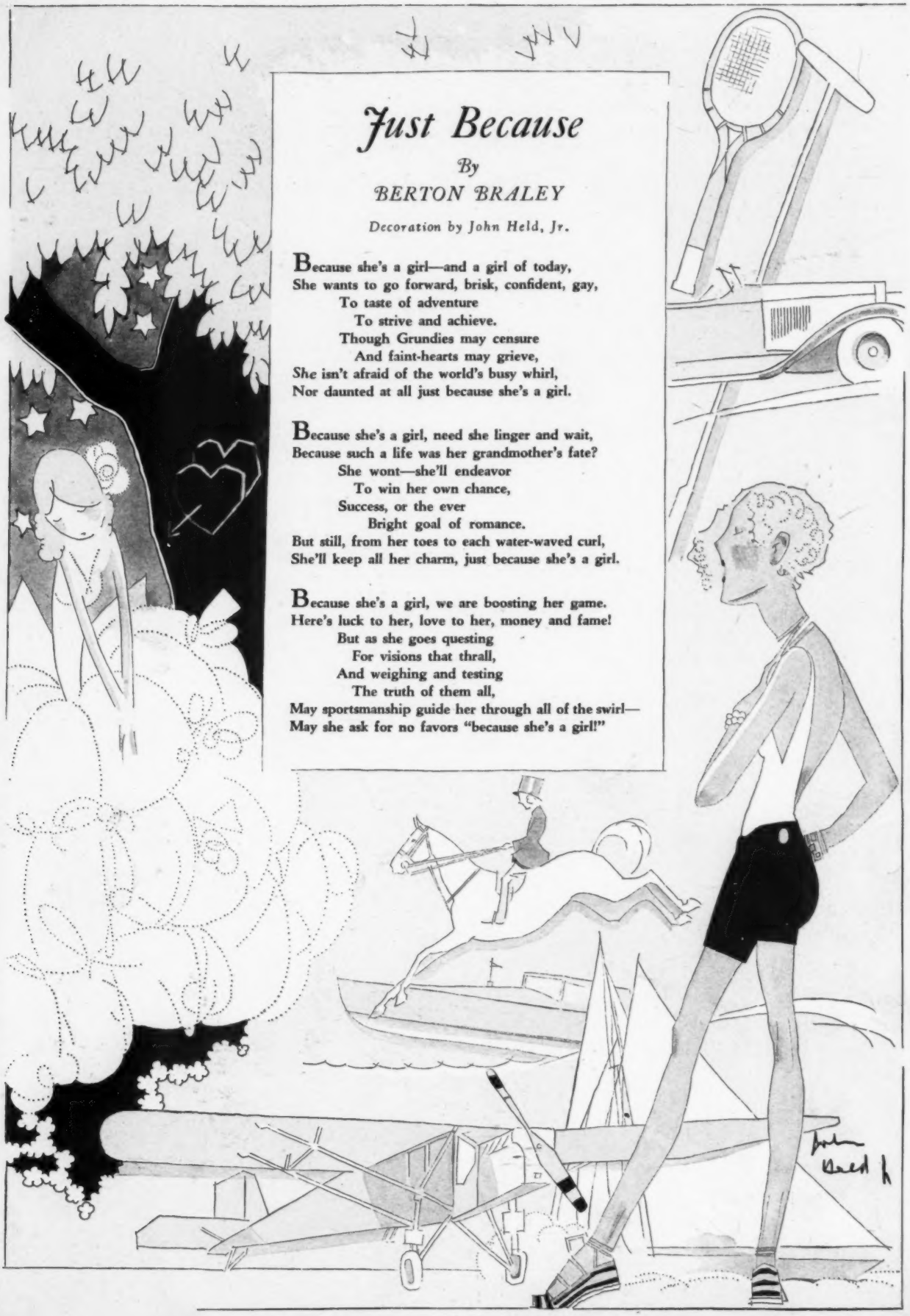
In our impatience, in our ignorance of the perfect rhythm of eternity, we chafe at the leisurely processes of growth. We who are but an instant in the passage of Time cry out against the slow march of the Infinite. "Why the falling leaf? Why this careful swathing and shielding? Why this slow waiting, this meditation and retreat? Time passes. Hurry. Hurry on."

Centuries of seasoned growth, eons of rhythmic power, and we have not yet learned there is no hurry. Nothing abides saves the ordered beauty of life, the pure courage of brave waiting upon daily occasions. Life, in that it holds within its core all art, is the highest art. So vast a mystery leaves no room for haste. Moments of high power grow out of long seasons of brooding growth, of withdrawn energy. Think you, was Socrates born in a day? Or Moses, or Michelangelo, or Shakespeare? Countless other brave and noble souls passed, a golden rift across the gray expanse, that these great growths might be fulfilled.

We spend much time and precious energy in questioning: "Why must we drudge at the daily round when we so much desire to do noble deeds?" We are so secure in our belief that if given our way we would create a better world today and beyond, that we give poor grace to our appointed tasks. Poor workmen in the art of living, we skimp our bit while posing as critics of the order, scarce dreaming of the clog that we thus tie to the heels of the future.

You may be the first leaf in a long series of new growth. Or you may be the last and perfect one. But know this: You shelter some precious bit of beauty; you guard some rare crumbs of integrity; you are a leaf of the tree of life, created to pass on strength and sustenance for a greater, a nobler life to come.

Go on with your daily occasions through summer heat and winter storm and autumn's sweet serenity. In cheerful hope and brave waiting know that never a leaf falls without fulfilling its growth in the ordered scheme of things. You *do* count.



Just Because

By

BERTON BRALEY

Decoration by John Held, Jr.

Because she's a girl—and a girl of today,
She wants to go forward, brisk, confident, gay,
To taste of adventure
To strive and achieve.
Though Grundies may censure
And faint-hearts may grieve,
She isn't afraid of the world's busy whirl,
Nor daunted at all just because she's a girl.

Because she's a girl, need she linger and wait,
Because such a life was her grandmother's fate?
She wont—she'll endeavor
To win her own chance,
Success, or the ever
Bright goal of romance.
But still, from her toes to each water-waved curl,
She'll keep all her charm, just because she's a girl.

Because she's a girl, we are boosting her game.
Here's luck to her, love to her, money and fame!
But as she goes questing
For visions that thrall,
And weighing and testing
The truth of them all,
May sportsmanship guide her through all of the swirl—
May she ask for no favors "because she's a girl!"



Photo by
Lejaren À. Hiller

LEJAREN À HILLER:

Sometime in the late 90's Mr. Hiller came from Milwaukee to the Art Institute in Chicago, at just the time when that Alma Mater of drawing and painting was undergoing the agony of organizing and rehearsing its annual pageant and tableaux. The newcomer was seized upon to help in the providing and visualizing of ideas; and it was soon evident that in him the school had found not only a person of imagination, but an able organizer as well—in fact, a real showman. Lighting, posing, costuming and all the other things that seemed puzzles were easy to young Hiller. The result was that the pageant of that year excelled in originality and splendor all its forerunners, and a standard was set that holds today. So prolific in ideas was Mr. Hiller that to give expression to them all he had recourse to a speedier medium than the manual ones. So he chose photography. Among his very first plates were veritable triumphs of camera-art, and their value in advertising and illustrating was quickly seen. He became a busy man, and has been one ever since. Years ago he migrated to New York, where he today conducts an establishment that is unique in the field of photography.



ELINOR MILLARD:

A daughter of Wausau, Wisconsin, is Miss Millard, who, aged five, was brought to Portland, Oregon, where she lived until she became a co-ed in the University of California. She majored there in English literature and dramatics, and during her summer vacations she found splendid recreation in touring the West Coast with a Russian ballet troupe. After graduating with the Class of 1927, she came to New York, and became a member in the cast of "Burlesque." After the year's run of this play on Broadway, she played a part in "Machinal." And her spare time has been devoted to posing for artists. Mr. Hiller opines that with her intelligence and background of dramatic experience she is ideally suited to almost any artistic task. Motion pictures? Yes, she's been in quite a few.

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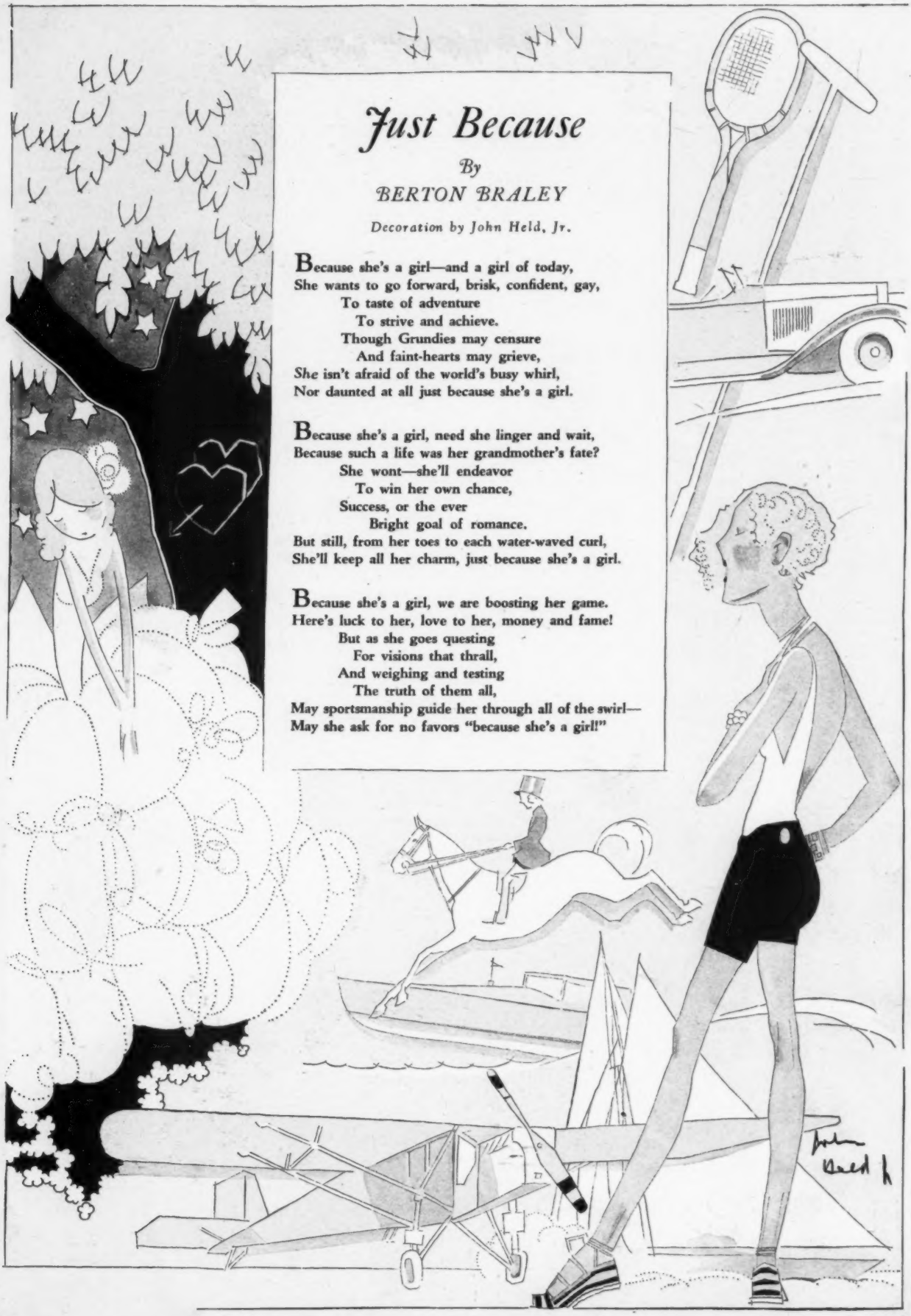




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Photo by Hayashi Studio New York

ETHEL PLUMMER: Ever so many years ago the original Plummers took up residence in New York, and to be a Plummer and not a Manhattan islander—well, a real Plummer just shouldn't let it happen. If that were not reason enough for Miss Ethel to remain Gothamite, there is the added one that the town has been mighty good to her. Her first offerings came through the color pages of metropolitan newspapers, in the shape of sprightly drawings that immediately took the public fancy. Soon the singular fitness of her conceptions for magazine covers was recognized by editors eager for novelties, and she found herself famous in that field. Although her drawings could never be called "realistic," they had, like most good art, that air of verity which is suggested by, in fact taken from, life itself. To acquire that facility took a training that splendidly fitted her for the painting of portraits—her chief concern today. The task she has set herself is the presentation of the highest type of the American woman.



Photo by Underwood and Underwood

MRS. PORTER MORGAN: Miss Plummer believes that in Mrs. Morgan she has found the best type of American womanhood, and indeed it is no hardship to "yes" her judgment. The lady is herself an artist who, although a non-professional, has achieved a fine measure of fame as a decorator of interiors. In Norwalk, Connecticut, on the shore of a lovely lake, she is now building a dwelling that will be the central feature of an estate made into the image of a rambling French farm. The furnishings and inside embellishments of this house will be from her own designs. Mrs. Morgan is an accomplished equestrienne, having ridden in several horse-shows, and will have ample ground on her estate to indulge her love for riding. So the new household bids fair to approach perfection. She continues her studies in art, and specializes in portrait etching.

Photo by Hal Phyfe New York



HOWARD SCOTT: Although Mr. Scott is not yet thirty, he has behind him a great many years devoted to the study of drawing. Indeed, the time he spent getting acquainted with the celebrated three Rs in the routine manner at his home town, Holyoke, Mass., seemed merely incidental to his major occupation of learning to express his emotions by graphic means. Thus it came about that when he entered the Pratt Institute in New York, to put himself under academic direction, he had already acquired a manner of his own which fitted passing well into the school work, and proved a mighty asset when he graduated from the institution and had to make his own way. His chief products are posters, and many a piece of merchandise is a better seller for his illuminations. Mr. Scott's studio is in New York. However, when he indulges his hobbies of motor-boating and automobiling, which is as often as possible, it's mostly done back home in Massachusetts.



Photo by Apeda, New York

ALICE LORRAINE: Still pretty much a child was Miss Lorraine when she heard the clarion call of art from across the river—which is to say, New York, for she is Brooklyn-born and -raised. It seemed a wonderland to Alice, hers to explore, and never has it ceased to fascinate her. During her several seasons with one of the big Broadway productions, she became one of its noted beauties, and found time and opportunity aplenty to pose for artists. Her personal charm and remarkable dramatic ability quickly made her one of the favorite models in New York's studios. The work was so fascinating, so to her liking, and she came into contact with so many interesting personalities, that she gave up the stage, and is lost to it forevermore—perhaps. During the past three years Mr. Scott has had her coöperation for many of his conspicuous successes. Of course she horseback rides; but as equines become fewer, she is experimenting with high-powered motors, which are really a good, if synthetic, substitute.



WILLIAM MEADE PRINCE

Having a father who was a railroad man and liked his work, what wonder is it that William should be congenitally blessed with a love for travel? So he traveled prodigiously, but not just for the sake of going somewhere. As he went, he not only looked, but he saw—which is a distinction with a colossal difference. Really seeing things, an amazing ability to record what he observes, plus a splendid sense of humor—that is the individuality of Mr. Prince's art. Moreover, he came into a "solid" academic schooling under the painter Howard Giles. Until drafted by the Red Book Magazine's editor, the artist gave all his time to advertising illustrations. Chosen to make the pictures for the splendid sport stories of the late Gerald Beaumont, it was evident that here was an instance where author and illustrator were singularly complementary, both appealing alike to popular and sophisticated taste. But advertising could not wholly lose so valuable a worker, and so Mr. Prince now divides his time by serving both commercial and literary ends. He was born in Roanoke, Virginia, and now lives in Westport, Connecticut.



LILLIAN HUGHES:

Folks in Birmingham, Alabama, well remember the time when Miss Hughes, charming daughter of one of the Southland's conspicuous families, and one of their city's belles, left the town of her birth to marry a none-too-pecunious, none-too-promising young artist. What the young couple lacked in worldly goods, they richly made up in enthusiasm, courage and ambition. True, to make their way, both had to work; and never did two people go to their tasks more gladly—he at his easel, she as a model for everything from pretty girls to fat old gentlemen. It was difficult, but it was fun; and now that prosperity has come to them, Mrs. — but you've guessed it: Miss Hughes is none other than she—Mrs. Prince still gets a thrill from posing, though no longer in the rôles of fat men, et al. The Princes have a large house, a wonderful garden, horses, dogs—and, wonder of wonders—a beautiful small daughter. So you see they're as busy as ever.

Photos by Bachrach, New York

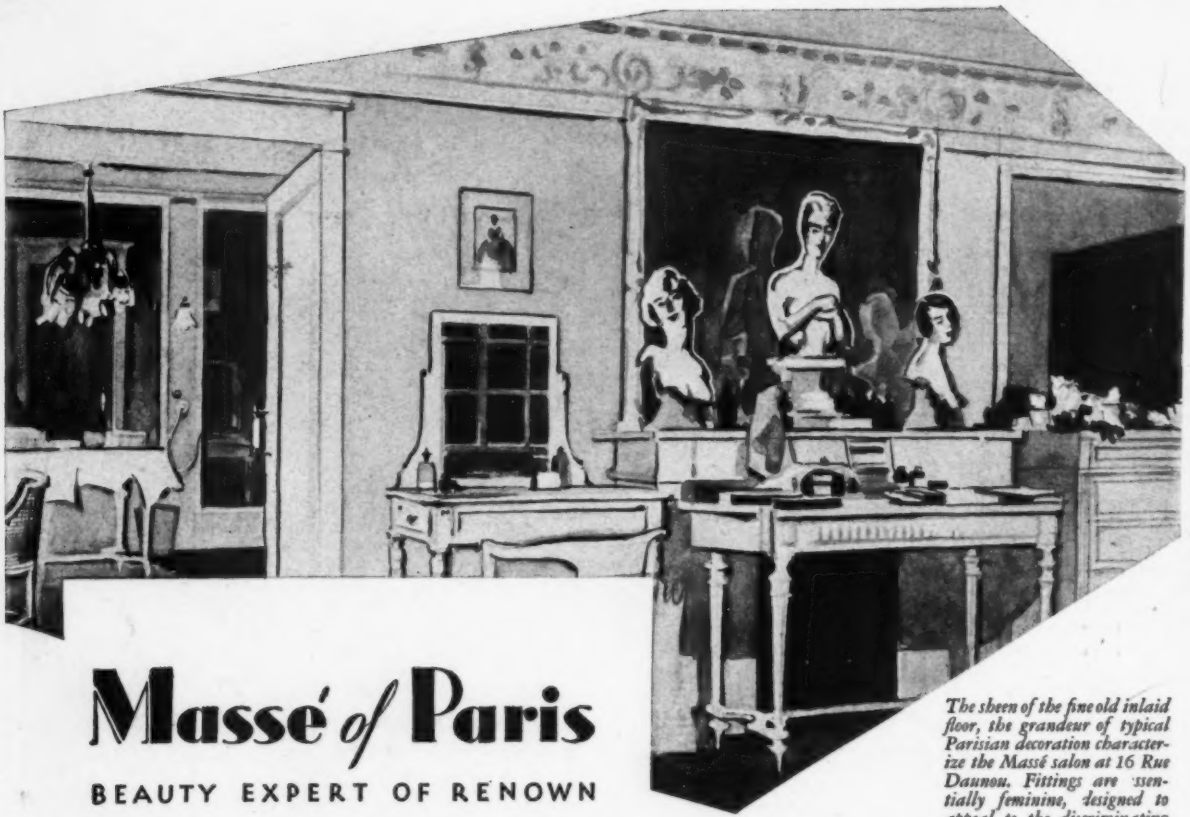
Photo by
De Mirjian Studios
New York



KENNETH F. CAMP: When Mr. Camp graduated from high school in his home town, Utica, New York, his most strenuous efforts had gone toward improving the noble game of baseball, especially as played by his class team. His training in athletics had perforce been plenty, and for art there had hitherto been but a modicum of preparation. Nevertheless, he had long set his heart on becoming an illustrator, and so lost no time in departing for New York and lining up with the Art Students' League. When he was called overseas to join in the fighting, he laid down the implements of his chosen profession, to take them up again sometime later when, wounded, he had returned and convalesced. Having absorbed all he could of the mysteries of art academics, he left the League and hung out his illustrator's shingle. It is unusual that his first commission was an assignment to illustrate a magazine story; but so it was. The late Jay Hambidge, who revolutionized American picture composition, was the father of Mrs. Camp. Undoubtedly this relationship had much to do with the young artist's speedy rise.



PATRICIA SMYTHE: The State of Georgia sets great store by the beauty of its daughters. To be sure, they are born beautiful, but the girls' schools and colleges of that commonwealth are jealously mindful that their wards develop into perfect blossoms. In this atmosphere Miss Patricia, born in Augusta, was brought up. Now, if any young ladies are born equestriennes, first rank might be conceded to the girls from the South, and it was Miss Smythe's ability to ride, almost as much as her comeliness, that brought her to the attention of the movie magnates and so into pictures. Also it brought her to the ken of Manhattan and its art circles. Though the picture producers are always eager to have her assistance, she manages to do quite a bit of posing between engagements—particularly for Mr. Camp.



The sheen of the fine old inlaid floor, the grandeur of typical Parisian decoration characterize the Massé salon at 16 Rue Daunou. Fittings are essentially feminine, designed to appeal to the discriminating clientele of M. Massé.

Massé *of* Paris

BEAUTY EXPERT OF RENOWN

urges his patrons to use

this one treatment to keep the skin lovely

"The simplest method of skin care is by far the best of all. That is the consistent use of Palmolive Soap, which combines deep cleansing with the well-known cosmetic effects of palm and olive oils."

E. Massé

16 Rue Daunou, Paris

AT 16 Rue Daunou, Paris, many of the world's most distinguished women are accustomed to consult E. Massé on problems of skin care. Massé gives much time and thought to home beauty methods, as well as to the various complexion treatments given in his artistic salon de beauté.

"Efficient but gentle cleansing of the skin at home is an absolute requirement of success in our work," says Massé. "Clients who follow our advice *never* use any soap except that which blends oils of palm and olives—Palmolive. They are the ones whose skin shows the greatest improvement as a result of the treatments we give in the salon."



Other authorities agree

All the leading figures in the Parisian world of beauty culture agree with M. Massé. Lina Cavalieri, Vincent, Mme. Valentin le Brun—these are just a few of the many French authorities who recommend the daily use of Palmolive Soap. And in Berlin, Vienna, London, Madrid—in New York and all the cosmopolitan centers of culture—one meets this same advice.

First, make a rich lather of Palmolive Soap and warm water, to be rubbed, with both hands, well into the skin. Two minutes of soap massage, a rinse, first with warm water, then with cold. A final ice water rinse as astringent. Dry skin usually needs some oily cream at least once a day. Oily skin requires an astringent lotion and the use of a day cream with drying effect.

In this 2-minute treatment millions of women find a solution to their problems of skin care. Palmolive is now the leading complexion soap not only in the United States but also in 48 other countries.



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September 1929 The RED BOOK Magazine Volume LIII Number 5

EDWIN BALMER, *Editor*
ASSOCIATE EDITORS: ARTHUR MCKEOGH, New York; DONALD KENNICOTT, Chicago. ART DIRECTOR: HENRY A. THIEDE

A COMMON-SENSE EDITORIAL

Too Much Seasoning

By
BRUCE BARTON

THREE men who manage a business were discussing a junior executive. One of them wanted to promote him.

Another, and more conservative, said: "I think he's too young. Some of his ideas are good, but others would get us into trouble if we let him run loose. I should like to keep him where he is for at least two or three more years. He needs more seasoning."

The first man exploded. "Seasoning!" he exclaimed. "What do you mean by seasoning? You mean you want to squeeze all the initiative out of him. You want to make him safe, sound and cautious. In other words, you want him to be a second edition of ourselves.

"Isn't individuality the most important thing in the world? Has anything big ever been accomplished except by men who made mistakes? Youth must be the mainspring of our future progress. I mean *real* youth, youth that has not had too much seasoning."

In the same week I met two fathers who are meeting the problems of parenthood in diametrically different ways.

One of them frets so much about his children that he has never had any enjoyment from them. He himself started life poor, and is now rich. It distresses him that his children spend money more easily than he did. He is forever writing them didactic letters at school, and making their holiday periods a purgatory by delivering success-talks.

The other parent has five children. Two have made a fair amount of money; the others are poor. One is in business. One is a country doctor. One is nothing in the eyes of Messrs. Dun and Bradstreet. He is a dreamy-eyed lad who writes poetry and regards the world as a pleasant place.

That father takes equal pride and delight in all five. He says they are healthy; that they have high ideals; that each is different from the others, and each, in his own fashion, a success. He is glad that he made no effort to soften their individuality or influence their choice of a career.

I think that on the whole there is too much parental worry. I think there is too much complacent assumption on the part of men at the top of business that *they* are the supreme glory of the universe and that all youth should be molded in their image.

—In short, too much seasoning.



Since croquet days in the early forties Whitman's have been the sweets preferred by sports lovers.

Out-of-doors people today find in THE SAMPLER the perfect touch of pleasure and food-stimulation one needs after exertion at tennis, polo, golf, swimming, boating, riding —all the varied sports of this sports-loving age.

Sold at summer resorts by selected agents, each supplied *direct* with fresh and perfect

Whitman's candies

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The Five Nations

Decoration by
Frederick J. Garner

THE Indians of North America played a part, in fixing the fate of this continent, which is seldom appreciated. It is our habit to hold them in mind simply as savage and implacable enemies who fought, indiscriminately, the white invaders, and who opposed the occupation of the land by the whites without having any final effect upon the invaders.

In fact, it was the power of the Five Nations of the Iroquois—the Mohawks, Oneidas, Senecas, Cayugas and Onondagas—that largely determined that North America become English and not French.

The English, as everyone recalls, settled along the Atlantic coast; the French spread from the valley of the St. Lawrence. Between lay two Indian confederations—the Algonquian and the league of the Iroquois which centered in northern New York.

The formation of this league, which was completed before the incursion of the Europeans, was the greatest feat of Indian leadership and statecraft north of Mexico.

It is, indeed, the story of Hiawatha, who was an actual Mohawk chief who undoubtedly proceeded along the lines described in the Hiawatha legend. Meditating over the evils afflicting his people, he formed the scheme for a league of the Indian nations which would improve their lot and lead eventually to universal peace.

The alliance of the Five Nations was effected; but the Indians were still far from arriving at the goal of Hiawatha's dream of peace, when the coming of the white man forever prevented the further development of an Indian state.

In fact, the Iroquois league was a war league; and it was most energetically combating the Algonquians when, in 1609, Champlain took part in it, and won, a battle near Ticonderoga.

So small were the numbers engaged that it was little more than a skirmish; yet this fight was to have enduring and decisive effect; for Champlain entered the contest on the side of the Algonquians, and thereby made mortal enemies of the Five Nations, who were soon to prove themselves the more powerful people at war. They allied themselves with the English, and from that time fought Champlain and his allies.

An officer of the English troops related some of the methods by which the Five Nations were kept loyal:

The Mohawks, on starting upon an expedition, informed him that they expected the usual military honors.

Accordingly he drew out his garrison. "The men presented their pieces as the Indians passed, and the drum beat a march; and with less respect, the Indians would have been dissatisfied.

"They passed in a single row, one after another, with great gravity and profound silence; and every one of them, as he passed the officer, took his gun from his shoulder and fired into the ground near the officer's foot."

It was the power of this Iroquois league of the Five Nations, who were turned against the French, and their presence in such a situation that they formed a barrier to attack upon the English from the north, which proved to be a large factor in the preservation of the colonies upon the Atlantic coast.

"Sing For Your S

THE author of "Glitter" tells the love-story of a modern girl and two young men whose ways with her were very different.



SOMETIMES puzzled people said: "Is it *'Miss'* or *'Mrs.'?"*

If she wished to explain, she answered casually, "Either." If she did not, she answered, "Miss."

Miss Celia Jordan.

This was the fourth stage in the evolution of her name. She had been Celia Wayne, of Atlanta, Georgia. Then Mrs. Roger Jordan of New York. Then Mrs. Roger Jordan in the evenings and on Sundays, and Mrs. Celia Jordan every week-day from nine to five-thirty.

Echoes of that third stage still sounded in some quarters. Business associates who had worked with her then persisted in calling her Mrs. Jordan—though her husband had been ever a first-name-less myth to them. Hostesses who had entertained her when she was half of a couple remembered it in introducing her now, and always would. Apparently the mailing-lists of shops and storage warehouses and French hand-laundries and the like were never altered or revised, for circulars addressed, "Mrs. R. B. Jordan, Gramercy Park," (as it had been in the telephone book in 1926) pursued her even yet wherever she moved.

Sometimes she wondered if advertisements of Madison Avenue haberdashers and Columbus Circle motorcar dealers were forwarded to Roger in California. It would be too bad, she thought, if they were. Poor Roger! He had loved New York so. He was sentimentally capable of an exquisite nostalgia over anything at all that came from there.

Celia lived—this year—in a tall new apartment-house near the East River. She would probably move again the last of September. She always did. There was always something you didn't like about any New York apartment you took; experience taught you that, and you leased an apartment for one year only.

Then, when it developed that the heat in winter was insufficient, or that a professional tap-dancer dwelt and rehearsed every night overhead, or that the attendants in the lobby could not

Supper!"

By Katharine Brush

Illustrated by Henry Raleigh



Roger, the broken-hearted, had been cheerful enough. Perhaps he had convinced himself that Celia would change her mind.

be induced to give warning of callers, or that the southern exposure was about to be nullified forever by another tall apartment building rising hard by, you had at least the consolation of saying to yourself: "Oh, well. *Next* year—"

Celia's current apartment watched the river through a window that was like a many-paned glass wall—that was, in fact, almost the whole east wall of the living-room. At night it was spectacular. The crimson curtains were left parted, and between them the lighted life of the river glided beautifully by through the dark. Of course there was seldom anyone there in the evening to see and admire. But Celia when she came home would sometimes cross the room to the window and stand before it, motionless—a slender silhouette with a wrap of velvet or of silver, and a small sleek head in a high crushed fold of fur.

Besides the living-room, she had a spacious bedroom, a bath-dressing-room, and a little kitchen. Her servant Mandy, spouse of a taxicab driver, lived in the Bronx, whence she arrived on weekday mornings at eight, Sunday mornings at eleven, to make her mistress' coffee and two thin wafers of buttered toast and carry it in, with the mail, on a four-legged tray.

Mandy cleaned the apartment, put it in order, and took meticulous care of Celia's clothes. To the performance of these duties she devoted half the day. She was gone all afternoon, with permission, returning about five-thirty, to answer the petulant six-to-seven-o'clock-in-the-evening phone.

"Is Miss Jordan there?" Voices tenor and barytone, some strange and some familiar. "Hello—Mandy? This is Mr. Gilbert." (Or Mr. Birkett. Or Mr. Lane. Or Mr. McDonald.) "Is Miss Jordan there?"

Unless she was having tea somewhere, in which case she would surely be in by six-thirty or quarter of seven, Miss Jordan was there. "Who is it?" she always sang from her bedroom or her dressing-room, while Mandy was still at the instrument in the foyer, finding out.

When informed, she would either make a little face, or else she wouldn't. But Mandy had observed that whether or not Miss Jordan made a face, her tone in answering was always the same. "H'*lo* there!" she always cried happily. "How're *you?*" As if this were the call of calls for which she had waited.

There was an extension telephone in her room, beside a day-bed. She talked lying stretched at full length, with her rumpled blonde head among taffeta cushions. Her costume for these conversations was apt to be most informal. Sometimes it was a negligée, sometimes a heavy white bath-gown of Turkish toweling. Her feet half wore, half didn't wear, irreverent loose-heeled mules, one or the other of which was forever coming off as she talked; then the bare foot felt about in search of it.

The telephone required the use of one hand only. With her free hand it was possible for Celia during a dialogue not only to locate, light, smoke and presently extinguish a cigarette, but also to issue eloquent though mute instructions to Mandy.

She could wave away a gold gown and beckon forth a white one, select a pair of slippers from a number of proffered pairs, demand an ash-tray, indicate a draft from an open window, ask to be shown what time it was, and suggest that bath-water be started, all in pantomime, while saying to the mouthpiece: "Let me think. . . . . Perhaps I'd better tell you what I *haven't* seen. I haven't seen the new Guild play. . . . . You have? . . . . No, you mustn't do that. *Nothing's* amusing enough to see twice! . . . . Now let me think—"

When Miss Jordan's bath was drawn and the lavender pebbles of perfume dropped in it, and when the gossamer things that she would don were laid out on the bed, it behooved Mandy to repair with all speed to the kitchen for the mixing of a shakerful of cocktails. She arranged a tray: one frosted silver shaker, two small glasses. She fixed a few canapes of anchovy paste or caviar, or a dish of olives broiled in sheaths of bacon skewered with toothpicks, to go with the cocktails.

She turned on two warm lamps that Miss Jordan liked in the living-room. She straightened the magazines and fattened the cushions. She answered the doorbell when it rang, and took the gentleman's hat and stick, helped him off with his coat, and relieved him of the box containing Miss Jordan's corsage if there was that box, and gave a secret sniff of scorn if there wasn't.

This every evening.

You will have guessed that Celia was neither aged nor unattractive. As a matter of fact, she was twenty-six and lovely. Her eyes were remarkable. They were exotic eyes, seeming not native, not modern, in shape or expression. To name their color was difficult even for people close to her. Roger had always insisted that they were golden.

Sunburned skin went well with the eyes, and with white teeth and tawny hair; Celia had found that out, in twenty-six summers. Hence the monster lamp that hung its gleaming nickel head over the narrow sheeted cot in her dressing-room. A sun-lamp, this. Winter and summer, three times a week, for ten minutes at a time, she lay on the cot like a recumbent statue, slightly saffron, with purple fingernails and purple lips, in the weird glare. She was beautifully tanned now, the year round.

She wore gold or green or rust—autumnal shades—or white or black. Gold made her all of a color. White made her vivid as nasturtiums. Her clothes were charming, selected and fitted with infinite care, so that they might be worn as Celia wore them—thoughtlessly. She had a passion for antique jewelry, for good furs, for pumps with buckles. She liked small hats and subtle, sheer dark hose.

She mixed three brands of perfume for a perfume no one else had. When other women asked her what it was she said: "Oh, something. I don't know. An atomizer accident."

Twice in the past two years she had tried to let her hair grow long again, and twice she had despaired at the halfway stage. Now she was trying once more, this time with promise of success. She wore the hair sleek on her head like honey-colored satin—like a cap, around the low tight edge of which the ends appeared, in a sort of scroll of flattened hairpinned ringlets. It was becoming, but Celia didn't think so. She laughed about it, saying: "Isn't it quaint?"

It was declared by certain young married women of her circle that she had the best time of any girl they knew. One or another of them was always sighing enviously: "Oh, *you!* You have the *best* time!" Or: "You're the luckiest thing!" They spoke of her independence, financial and personal, of her beauty, of her popularity, of the "dozens" of men who were "mad" about her.

"What more do you want!" they said. An exclamation, not a question.

They said she had her cake and ate it too.

"Umm," Celia agreed, with reservations. "I suppose so."

When Roger Jordan first visited Atlanta on the Christmas trip of the glee-club of his university, Celia Wayne had been eighteen years old. She had been starry-eyed, pink-cheeked, continually almost breathless with the excitement and the din and the glitter of living. A little Southern party girl, all pastel tulle and silver shoes and golden head and soft slurred voice saying, "Hon-neh," for "Honey." She was not little really; then, as now, she measured five feet three and one-half inches. But you said "little" of as fluffy a young person as Celia Wayne had been.

Her trousseau, gathered that next spring for their June wedding (that followed Roger's graduation only by a week), was typical. The recollection of it could make her smile. Fluffy was the word! Chiffons and laces. Trailing ribbons. Bouffant telephone-dollish evening gowns. Big drooping hats. A jingling handcuff of thin bracelets, ten or a dozen. Little round-toed colored shoes, tying over insteps with pert bows.

In the North, in New York, she had outgrown frills and ruffles that first summer—long before her last ones were worn out. There had ensued an experimental period of a year or so when she had sought to determine, by trying out several types, what type she was. Sometimes during the year she had worn filmy feminine dresses as of old (but with a difference) and been "pretty." Sometimes, in a scant dark tailored suit, a Buster Brown collar, a small tight hat pulled low on one brow and her hands dug deep in her pockets, she had been "cute." This memory also made her smile. "Pretty" was anathema now. And "cute" was worse.

Roger in those days had been—presumably he was still—a beautiful young man with curly hair. A lazy, long young man, whose walk was sauntering; who lounged on the nape of his neck and the base of his spine when he sat down. As an adolescent, he had grown too fast, and this had fatigued him—permanently, it seemed. He slept a great deal. Almost his only exercise was stretching.

He was the one son of a widowed mother without daughters who for twenty years had said: "No, no, don't move. Sit still, dear. Let me do it." He expected this of everybody. His eyes were brown and trustful. "You'll do it for me," they said. And you did. You always thought you'd be *darned* if you would; but you always did.

Everybody waited on Roger.

He was naturally gifted, having a really fine mind and a number of little semi-precious talents. He could sing rather well. He could play any stringed instrument, by ear. He could write. He could make surprising pencil sketches. There was almost nothing that he could not do—as an amateur. He did nothing expertly and nothing long.

The year that he was a bridegroom, he was variously an art student, a bond salesman and a newspaper reporter. The year after that he was a reporter, a gentleman of leisure, and co-author of a musical show which failed. He said to Celia that to find one's *métier* was so important that a few mistakes at the outset did not matter. Celia agreed. She agreed until the third year. Then, because she needed many things and meant to have them, she found some work of her own.

She had met a Mrs. Armstrong, an interior decorator who specialized in nurseries and playrooms; and it was as one of Mrs. Armstrong's several assistants that her business career began. She was immediately happier. The days had been too long, before. Bridge bored her. Domesticity she loathed. Shopping was impracticable when you hadn't any money. And even waiting on Roger left idle hours.



"Tell me!" she cried. He told her. He was leaving New York, going to Europe to study Old World architecture.

She liked her new work. She liked the little shop on Fifty-sixth Street—"Playplace, Incorporated"—where everything for sale was small and gay, with ducks on it. She liked Mrs. Armstrong, and shared that childless lady's unflagging real enthusiasm for the gay small things.

"Now look at that!" Mrs. Armstrong exclaimed over each new importation. Unofficially, with no potential buyer within earshot, she cried: "Have you ever *seen* anything so adorable?"

Celia never had. And she was as deft in the matter of infecting patrons with this same ardor as was Mrs. Armstrong herself. She became invaluable to the shop. She made money. Working on a tiny salary and commissions, she earned over six thousand dollars the first year. The second year her income increased to a little over ten.



Roger was writing a book that year. Rather, he was Gathering Ideas; the actual writing had not yet begun. His attitude with regard to Celia's business position was characteristic, from first to last. He had not protested when she went to work; he had been indulgent and amused. So his baby wanted a job, did she? Well, she should have a job! (He might have been speaking of an ice-cream soda.)

He remained amused. Cute little girl, going bustling off to business every morning! He approved the clothes she wore to work. Plain dark frocks with frivolous cuffs and collars—frocks trim and brisk, yet ultra-feminine and fragrant, like herself. While she fastened these in the mornings, he watched appreciatively from bed; and when she left, he blew her a kiss from his fingers.

Celia had intended that such money as she made should help to swell their mutual bank-account. She had not foreseen that it would become the Roger Jordans' sole means of support, within two years. But it inevitably did. Here again Roger was Roger. During the first year he appeared to think of Celia's earnings as pin-money, with which she might buy trifles for herself. This while it clothed her, transported her, paid her dentist's and doctor's bills, and—as often as not—fed them both.

During the second year her increasing contributions attained in Roger's mind the dignity of an Investment, a sound one, which Celia was making in his future. He pointed out that in assuming part (he called it part) of the financial responsibility of the family, she was leaving him free for creative work that would ultimately yield them a harvest. Celia privately doubted that it would; and in due time she became aware that he wasn't working. He wasn't even pretending, except to her. . . . .

The lady's name was Mimi.

This was a crowning straw, but a straw merely. It was not, and Celia knew it was not, the first of Roger's infidelities. It was simply the most conspicuous to date. Many people knew of it. And Celia, thinking that these must think Roger's wife a perfect fool, herself thought: "Well, I am a fool. Why do I keep on?"

Why indeed? Freedom would be heavenly. On her growing income she could live well—twice as well at least as she lived now. Roger was an expensive luxury. She remarked this to herself, then corrected it. "No, not a luxury. Habit."

She did not love him. She was maternally fond of him, nothing more. She did not even care enough about him to be jealous. He could not hurt her. Only this pricked pride, this sense of other people's pity, hurt her now.

"I will *not*," said Celia, "be 'poor Celia Jordan.'"

Once she had made up her mind, she was adamant. She knew there must be no softening, no sentimentalizing, no emotional dramatization of the situation.

Friendly she could be. She need not hate him, nor bear him any malice; and she did not. She wanted an amicable divorce on the mildest possible grounds. The indicated State-of-New-York divorce she would not consider. She went to Reno, spent the summer there, and returned—Miss Celia Jordan—in the fall.

She had had a taste of freedom before she went. The break with Roger had taken place in March; for business reasons she had been unable to begin her three months' sojourn in Nevada until the latter part of June. In the interim Roger had lived somewhere in the Village; and Celia had lived alone in their apartment. She still remembered the day they had packed his things and he had moved. She thought about it often. A curious day. All during the packing she had said to herself: "This is cataclysmic. I ought to feel *some*thing—"

She had felt nothing at all. Save for the thin announcing voice

in her mind, that stripping of closets and emptying of chiffonier drawers had seemed no more significant than a selecting of garments to go to the cleaner's. Even Roger, the broken-hearted, had been cheerful enough about it. Perhaps he had convinced himself that Celia would change her mind before July, that the delay was a reprieve that would end in pardon.

He had ambled about the apartment, smoking, issuing instructions—keeping the phonograph in the living-room playing the while. Tunes from the "Garrick Gayeties," from "Sally," from "Tiptoes." Celia remembered. She remembered a convivial highball they had had at the very last, sitting close together on the bulging side of a suitcase.

"Well," Roger had said, smiling lazily down at her, "anyway—here's to us!"

They were still friends. During the year they dwelt apart in New York, before and after their divorce, they saw each other every now and then. They had "dates" together. It was funny, Celia thought, how the minute you ceased to live with a husband, he became charming, attentive, thoughtful—all the things you would have had him—so that, regretting the loss of him never at all, you none the less must think: "Oh, dear—why couldn't he *always* have been like this?"

Rogers opened doors for her now. He held the backs of chairs for her. He was quick with a briquet for her cigarettes. Orchids came from him in the afternoons before their evenings; the first orchids from Roger in years. He noticed things she wore. He remembered things she liked to eat. "Oh, *maitre d'hôtel!* A little sauce Bearnaise with the *filet* for Madame."

At the end of the year he proposed to her, casually, one evening at the Lido, between dances. He was about to leave New York for Hollywood, where he would write motion-picture titles. He suggested that Celia remarry him and go along.

"You'd like California," he assured her.

Celia said he was sweet, but that she was never going to marry again. Marriage, she said, was "really pretty terrible." (A generalization.) Roger said that as a matter of fact he didn't believe he'd ever marry again either. He said she was absolutely right. Marriage was a mistake. (A generalization.)

"'He travels farthest who travels alone,'" said Roger.

In the living-room overlooking the East River, on a little table, there was a photograph of him in a very nice red suède frame. A photograph taken in Hollywood, by a photographer who had evidently mistaken his subject for a movie actor. Roger's curly hair was shown in a halo of gentle light. One hand was under his chin, and his eyes were lifted. "The eyes about *here,*" the photographer must have said, indicating a mantelpiece.

Men who came to see Celia were prone to regard this photograph with mingled curiosity, hostility and wonder. "My God!" seemed to be their unanimous optical comment.

Now and then one of them ventured to make it aloud. "But my God, Celia! How could—"

"Careful," Celia would interrupt lightly. "I like him, you know."



"Still?"

"Of course. We're very good friends."

Only Kerry McDonald, of all the men who came to see her, never said a word about the photograph of Roger. He never even looked at it. Simply and silently and seemingly absent-mindedly, whenever he came, he picked it up and laid it down on its face.

There are divorcées to whom their friends, inviting them to cocktail parties, say: "And bring your nice man with you."

Then there are divorcées to whom their friends say: "Bring a beau."

For the first two years of her freedom,



"Hm?" she would inquire, without interest. They were disappointed in her, displeased, but it did not matter.

Celia was asked to bring "a beau." Or "a boy-friend." Or "any man you like." It was only very lately that her friends had begun to say: "And bring Kerry."

Not that Celia was falling in love with Kerry McDonald. She would have denied that hotly—did, in fact. She was not engaged to him; nor was there what is called an understanding between them. It was simply that she was seeing more of Kerry than of anyone else, because she liked him better and because—well, the explanation is long. In a manner of speaking, two years long.

To sum it up briefly, Celia had discovered that many of the things about freedom which seem most desirable in expectation, in actuality are not desirable at all. For example:

You became "free"—and at first that meant that you had nobody to think of, nobody to consider, except yourself. Then it began to mean that you had nobody to think of *you*. One inevitable day, you had a headache, or a touch of grippe, or got some disturbing news, or lost some money—and nobody cared. Nobody said: "Poor Celia!" Nobody even knew about the terrible time you were having. Bad as it was, it wasn't bad enough to tell—just *any*body. People didn't like you as well as all that.

You were sorry for yourself a good deal of the time. You were often very lonely. The fact that you knew a great many young men who never let you be lonely long did not lessen the peculiar anguish of the loneliness while it lasted. You belonged to no one. You were primarily important to no living human being. These things you remembered, when you were left to yourself for a little while. You thought if you died,—and you might, if this kept up,—nobody would mourn.

"Beautiful floral offerings," Celia said to herself grimly. "But no mourners."

She had thought that to know a great many young men, and to be taken out every evening by a different one, would be fun. It was not fun. It was often a bore, and always a strain. You couldn't relax. You couldn't be stupid or listless. You worked very hard all day, but you couldn't seem tired.

You couldn't say: "I don't feel like talking—do you mind?" They would mind very much. They weren't *friends*, where there were so many of them; they were dinner-companions, dancing-partners, escorts. Gayety was asked of you; and you gave it. You were vivacious. You entertained.

You sang for your supper.

As alternative to the evenings out, you stayed at home—alone. Celia had tried it often. It was strange that she never enjoyed those restful evenings as much as she thought she was going to. For one thing, she had to set them in advance, saying at the beginning of a week: "Now I'll save Thursday evening—"

The trouble was that when Thursday evening came, she invariably felt unusually well and quite merry and, in the vernacular, "like going places and seeing people." It just happened so. She was tempted to accept any last-minute invitation that might turn up, and only her conviction that to be available so late was not at all wise made her refuse.

She who never had sleep enough was never sleepy on those evenings. She seldom felt like reading—though she sometimes thought that if there were some one else reading in another big chair in the quiet room, she would. Dinner was a snack prepared by Mandy (who was a poor cook) and served on a quaking card-table near the window that looked at the river. Celia would wonder where everyone else was dining.

She would write letters, and look over clothes. . . . . Then it would be ten o'clock, only. It was always only ten o'clock, or nine-thirty, when you were alone. It was endlessly just the shank of the evening. Theaters wouldn't be out for an hour. Night-clubs hadn't thought of opening. People were only just having their *demi-tasse*. One couldn't go to bed yet.

She always forgot, on solitary evenings, that her other evenings were tiresome. They seemed glamorous, exciting, now; and in a queer way they seemed *past*. Behind her—over with. Each evening alone was the fancied beginning of a new era, when she would be alone at home, forlorn like this, oftener than not. She had beauty's dread of age; and she felt old on nights like these. She always thought: "I ought to've gone out. I ought to go out all I can, while I can. After all—it wont be long now."

And there was no one there to scoff at her, saying: *"Wha-a-at?"*

There had not been; but now there was. Kerry was the Some One There. He was the Presence in the other big chair in the quiet room that made reading pleasant and most peaceful. He was the comrade to whom you could say: "I'm tired. I don't feel like talking." You didn't even have to say it. Kerry knew.

He was in love with Celia, of course. He wanted to marry her—though he mentioned the fact only semi-occasionally. Celia was rabid on the subject of marriage. She had become more so with the failure of freedom to fulfill its glowing promise. This was a defense; but Celia didn't realize it. She thought it was wisdom.

"I *know*," she said. "I'm a burnt child."

"You're a little idiot," Kerry had countered once. "You don't like single blessedness—"

"But I do!"

Kerry nearly smiled. She had let him see the dark gray cloud that overwhelmed the silver lining, so many times.

"Well," said Celia, "I do usually, anyway. And *any*way," she clinched the argument, as Kerry still smiled, "I don't love you, Kerry."

"I know," he assented cheerfully.

"You're my favorite person," Celia continued. "I absolutely adore you—you know that. But I don't love you."

"I know," said Kerry again. "I keep forgetting."

He sounded meek. He was far from it. He was so far from it that Celia sometimes was secretly panic-stricken. "It's as if he were *sure* of me," she thought. "It's too ridiculous! What does he *mean?*"

And why did it alarm her?

Most of the time, however, her mind was at rest on the score of Kerry. He was a combination brother and squire and confidant; and that was perfect. That had been her great need, all along. Now her evenings at home did not need *(Please turn to page 136)*

Show Goat

By Sam Hellman



"I suppose if Mrs. Emerson were a bowlegged Eskimo, the show would be changed to fit a bowlegged Eskimo."

Illustrated by Tony Sarg

WE'RE gassing golf with the Emersons on the porch at Bayview when Larry Hunter barges into our midst and makes a lap for himself. Larry's the club fixer—the bozo that gets up everything from barn dances to petitions for tying tinware on the chairman of the house committee. In fact, he even absent-mindedly circulated one the summer he was chairman.

"Any of you folks know anything about acting?" inquires Hunter.

"I've been married three years," says I, "and the wife hasn't gone home to her mother yet."

"I mean acting," explains Larry. "We're figuring on staging a benefit show, and we've got to have some young people for the cast. How about you, Emerson?"

"Well," shrugs Breeze, "I've never been mistaken for Mrs. Fiske or the Four Marx Brothers, but there was a time when I was quite a mime."

"Yeah?" says Hunter eagerly. "When was that?"

"Some anno dominis ago," returns Emerson. "My last public appearance was in Terre Haute in a piece put on by the Elks—a minstrel. I was an end man—you know, the guy they ask: 'Who's that lady I seen you with on Sycamore Street last night?'—the answer being: 'That wasn't Sycamore Street. That was Tuesday evening.'"

"Were you as good," I inquires, "as that wheeze'd indicate?"

"Was I good!" exclaims Breeze. "Boy, I picked 'em out of their seats and laid 'em in the aisles."

"Of course," says Larry, "any experience is all to the merry, but I doubt if a one-night stand in a Terre Haute minstrel qualifies you for the part I have in mind."

"Don't let that get you to counting sheep," comes back Emerson. "I don't care what the part is. I'll guarantee to make it stick out like a red sweater at a formal funeral. Nobody sits on their hands when I do my stuff. I remember when we gave 'The Merchant of Venice' in high school—"

"What were you?" I cuts in. "The pound of flesh?"

"I was *Shylock*," returns Breeze; "and the way I handled the old bimbo I had the crowd hissing *Portia*."

"Shakespeare," observes Hunter, "hardly intended to make *Shylock* a sympathetic—"

"What do I care what Shakespeare intended?" growls Emerson. "Who was doing the acting, me or him? If I was to play *Simon Legree*, I'd have the audience wanting him to go to heaven instead of *Little Eva*. The boys and girls are always with me, whatever I do."

"I too would love to do the actings," chimes in Breeze's French wife Chérie at this point.

"I'm sure we can use you," says Larry. "Suppose you and your husband show up here tomorrow evening when the coach we've hired comes out. He's really going to do the picking. How about you two?" he asks, turning to me and the Frau.

"Put me down for a thoughtful silence off stage," I suggests, "or perhaps the character laughingly referred to in the second act as having died of hog-cholera years before the action opens."

"I'll take a small part," offers Jennie. "A perfect lady of the ensemble, or a condensed milkmaid or a—"

"It's not to be a musical," interrupts Hunter. "We're staging a new mystery piece called 'The Golf Club Assassin.'"

"Hell," says I, "you don't have to stage that! Just follow me around the course most any day, and—"

"What is it?" asks Emerson. "One of those palookas where suspicion's cast on everybody but the late Queen Victoria's pet Pekingese and the Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company?"

"In a way," replies Larry. "But I've put several new twists into the situation—"

"*You* have!" exclaims Breeze. "Are you the author of the—"

"I am," says Hunter, kind of defiant. "Is there anything wrong in me writing a play?"

"No," mutters Emerson, "but I sort of had the idea you manufactured corduroy pants for—"

"What if I do?" demands Larry. "Can't I leave my pants occasionally and take a flight with fancy?"

"Sure you can," says I. "I knew a girl once who washed dogs for a living, but that didn't keep her from becoming the sweet singer of Secaucus on the side. Today the world's making a beaten path to the Mange, as her place in Manhattan Transfer is called."

"My guess is," remarks the Missus kindly, "that Mr. Hunter has written a most interesting play. Tell us something about it, wont you?"

"Just a thing I dashed off in a few hours," says Larry modestly.

"While it's no masterpiece, I do think it's quite suitable for a benefit at Bayview. To begin with, all the action takes place on a golf-course—"

"In that case," I cuts in, "you may consider me for the part of the *First Divot Digger*. 'Alas, poor Yorick, I knew him well as Horatio.'"

"The plot," resumes Hunter, "is briefly this: *Lionel Montrose*, a handsome bachelor and quite a go-get-'em with the Jills, suddenly leaves a party at the club-house and an hour later is found on the thirteenth green with his head crushed in. By his side is a putting cleek. While a detective is questioning the guests—by the way, I think you could do the detective. You look like one and—"

"Oh, no," I horns in hastily. "It's just the square toes on my shoes that give you the impression."

"Swell detective you'd make," jeers Emerson. "You'd need a bloodhound to find your exit."

"Well, anyway," goes on Larry, "while the third degree's in progress, there enters *Dan Mason*, a young fellow who had quarreled earlier in the evening with *Montrose* over *Mason's* flirty Frau. He's pale and excited, and on his shirt's a red stain—"

"Had this laddie threatened to bump off *Montrose* during their row?" I asks shrewdly.

"He had," returns Hunter.

"Is it not also true," I continues, "that *Mason's* putting cleek is missing from his bag?"

"It is," says Larry; "but why all the questions?"

"I'm just thoroughly establishing the boy's innocence," I replies. "You may now proceed with your other new twists."

"It develops," relates Hunter, "that five persons at the party had left the house during *Lionel's* absence and had been seen going in the direction of the thirteenth green."

"But for why?" inquires Chérie.

"To get a cab," I explains. "They have a taxi-stand on the thirteenth green at this club."

"More probably to get a motorboat," suggests Breeze. "I often hear 'em putt-putt-putt down there."

"Listen!" scowls Larry. "Are you birds interested in what I'm telling you, or aren't you?"

"I'm compound interested," I assures him. "The identity of the murderer has me all hot and bothered. I know, of course, that it's either Senator Heflin or the chairman of the committee on the disposition of useless papers in the Department of the Interior, but—"

"If we need any more comedy relief," snaps the Missus, "we'll ask for it. . . . . Please go on with the play, Mr. Hunter."

"The big kick," obliges Larry, "is at the end of the second act. The crime's practically pinned on *Mason*, and he's about to confess, when his wife and the four other suspects each declares it was he or she that'd killed *Montrose*. That's a sock in the situation, but nothing at all compared to what follows. For the curtain, *Lionel Montrose* walks into the room!"

"*Montrose!*" I gasps. "I thought he'd had his hair parted with a putter on the—"

"That," smiles Hunter complacently, "is what the audience'll think too. As a matter of fact, it was *Lionel's* twin brother *Virgil* who'd been done in. All the suspicion stuff planted in the first two acts is merely a red herring dragged across the trail."

"Boy," says I, "that's not a red herring. That's a pink leviathan. However, my interest in the *Montroses* doesn't end with *Lionel*. Just why and how was *Virgil* killed?"

"I had some trouble taking care of that angle logically," admits Larry, "but I finally worked out a twist that even you'll have to admit is novel. It seems that *Virgil* had been in the British army in India and during the storming of Brahmagupta had stolen the sacred ruby from the forehead of the Buddha. The temple priest had followed him to America, tracked his victim to the golf-course and killed him with a putter he'd swiped out of *Mason's* bag."

"Personally," says I, "I don't think *Virgil* was killed at all. It was the plot that was found dead on the thirteenth green."

"How," asks Emerson, "do you explain the presence of all those folks on the same green at the same time, and at night?"

"Very simply," returns Hunter. "A big elm near by was a favorite trysting place for the club folk, and of course nobody could tell the truth about their being there without compromising somebody. For a while," he goes on, "I had the idea of having the whole thing end up as a caddy's dream, but—"

"Why not do it?" I interjects. "Caddies dream about stuff like that, especially when I've sliced a new ball into the rough."

"Well," says Larry, "I've got to go. All you folks be around for the casting tomorrow night."

"Count me in," comes back Breeze promptly. "I'm just itching to don the old sock and buskin again."

"You actually mean to act in that mess of merry mucilage?" I demands of Emerson when Hunter departs.

"Sure," says Breeze. "'The Golf Club Assassin' may not be Bernard Shaw at his best, but good acting has made worse dishes than that tasty."



"Mother," chimes in Doris, "when do I go out and dance?" "Right after the murder," I tells her. "That will make two of 'em in a row."

"Maybe," I allows; "but where's it going to get that? From you?"

"And nobody else but me," he declares. "I'll show you stuff that'll make the Barrymores curl up and cry themselves to sleep. Better take a few lines yourself. The play's for charity—"

"Charity," I points out, "is intended to reduce suffering, not to add to it. Besides, I have no desire at this day of my age to sponsor a shower of pensioned hen-fruit."

"When one loves one's art," says Emerson, "no sacrifice is too great. Anyhow, leaving everything else aside, it should be a good thing from a business standpoint—"

"Better not," I whispers. "I hear Jake Shubert and Flo Ziegfeld have the place all cluttered up with spies tonight."

"Later, perhaps," says Tremaine. "First I should like to do a bit of preliminary casting. May I ask if any of you ladies and gentlemen are of the profession?"

"Mr. Emerson, here," returns Larry, "has appeared as *Shylock* in a Terre Haute minstrel. You may have heard of—"

"To be sure," interrupts Dion, "I have heard of Terre Haute. Any others here who have had stage experience?"

It seems not, although it's brought out that one of our gigglers, a Miss Zoë Murgatroyd, had portrayed the *Spirit of Medicinal Wine* at a raisin festival out in California, and that Hunter himself had once given an imitation of Charlie Chaplin at a stag party of the Corduroy Pants Workers Protective Association.



"From a business standpoint!" I exclaims. "How will making public saps out of ourselves help us in the delicatessen game?"

Breeze and I, as you may have heard whispered about in select salami circles, are the representatives in this country for a group of foreign firms manufacturing de luxe food products. We do our bit toward persuading the American housewife to reach for a can-opener instead of a cook.

"Anything," declares Emerson, "that makes us well and favorably known is good for our game."

"Sure," says I, sarcastic. "I wouldn't think of buying a set of manhole covers from a guy unless he was favorably known as an E-flat piccolo-player. Just how much of a demand for our Artois truffles do you imagine'll be created in Sarcoxie, Mo., by your acting in this mélange?"

"Gosh," growls Breeze, "but you got a retail mind! Can't you see beyond the sale of one tin of tripe? I'm building for the future, when we'll need capital to expand our business. There are a lot of bankers and other lads in the upper brackets around here—"

"Perhaps," I cuts in; "but I doubt whether they'd take your acting for collateral." . . . .

While I have no more intention of being a party to "The Golf Club Assassin" than I have of shooting fish off of flagpoles, I drifts over to the club the following evening just for the ride. Twenty-five or thirty members are on hand to greet the coach, a Thesp named Dion Tremaine, who looks and acts like a cross between *Rupert of Hentzau* and an interior decorator "on the make" with a Park Avenue sucker.

"Shall I begin by reading the play?" inquires Hunter.

" 'Tis just as well," remarks Tremaine. "You'll have nothing to unlearn." Suddenly he turns and fixes me with a dramatic finger. "You," says he, "shall play the detective."

"Me!" I yelps. "What's the big idea? This is twice, now, I've been given that rap. Do I look like a house dick?"

"You have the necessary appearance," comes back the toast of the cut-rates, "and since I've heard you speak, the requisite voice as well. Now that that's settled—"

"Settled, your pink toes!" I barks. "I don't know the first thing about acting, and it's the last thing I want to know the first thing of."

"Come on," urges Larry. "Be a sport and cut in. I wouldn't be surprised if you stopped the show."

"If I was positive I could do that," says I, "I wouldn't hesitate for even the vulgar fraction of a moment. I'd read my lines right now."

"Perhaps," suggests Dion, "there is some other part you've set your heart on?"

"There is," I replies. "I want to be *Virgil Montrose*, the boy who's run down and sunk on the thirteenth green. I'm used to dying there."

"Suppose," says Tremaine a trifle wearily, "we pass by the detective for the nonce and proceed to further casting. Mr. Emerson strikes me as a good choice for *Mason*."

"Is that the lead?" asks one of the boys present.

"It may not be in the script," I comes back, "but it will be. Where McGregor sits is the head of the table."

"*Mason's* not exactly the lead," says Hunter. "*Lionel Montrose* is that. I have arranged with Mr. Tremaine to do *Lionel* himself, with Mrs. Emerson opposite him as the flirty *Mrs. Mason.*"

"A most excellent selection," murmurs Dion, his eyes playing over Chérie's pretty pan.

"Mrs. Emerson!" blurts out Zoë Murgatroyd. "Why, she can hardly speak a word of English."

"*Moi!*" exclaims Breeze's Frau excitedly. "*Je parle d'Anglais parfaitement! Je parle—*"

"That's all been taken care of," cuts in Larry. "As the play stands, now, *Mrs. Mason* is a French actress whom *Mason* married abroad and—"

"I suppose," snaps La Murgatroyd, "if Mrs. Emerson were a bowlegged Eskimo, the whole show would be changed to fit a bowlegged Eskimo. There are several women here capable of—"

"Don't worry, girlie," says I soothingly. "There are other fat female parts in the—"

"I don't care to play a fat female," interrupts Zoë angrily, "or any part at all in this mess. I think too much of myself to engage in a silly something written by a pants-manufacturer for delicatessen-dealers." With which she takes it on the lam.

"The *Spirit of Medicinal Wine,*" I observes, "appears to have gone a little sour."

The tentative casting's proceeded with, and everybody's fitted with a part, the wife drawing three lines and a couple of shrugs as a frill who'd palpitated over *Lionel* in the past. After that "The Golf Club Assassin" is read by Tremaine with appropriate gestures, but it sounds no better to me than it did when the corduroy kid was telling it. There isn't a situation in the piece that hasn't a beard seven feet long and snow-white, and you could get more comedy relief out of a good case of sinus complicated with a double earache and a suit for back taxes. Besides, several of the scenes are arrived at with all the logic of a guy cheating at solitaire to win the money he'd lost to himself the night before.

"You must leave something to the audience's imagination, don't you think?" returns Hunter, when I mildly suggest that the sudden appearance of a British Indian army officer on the thirteenth green of a Long Island golf-club requires some explanation.

"Indeed, I do," says I. "In fact, I'm willing to leave the entire play to the imagination of the audience."

"The G. C. A. is oke as it is," declares Breeze. "My acting of *Mason'll* make everything sound logical."

"Undoubtedly," I agrees.

At this point in the palaver a Mrs. Fennell, who'd been cast as some two hundred pounds of atmosphere in the first act and a low moan off-stage in the second, comes to bat.



"You dog!" he snarls. "If I ever see my feet within five wives of you, I'll snake you as I would a kill."

"I believe," says she, "the play could be made much more interesting and colorful if it were done in costume."

"In costume!" gasps Hunter. "What kind of costume?"

"Well," she returns, "couldn't you move it back to the time of Henry VIII or Cleopatra, for instance?"

"But my dear lady," expostulates Larry, "there were no golf-courses in those days and—"

"Perhaps not," cuts in Madame Fennell, "but they had other country-club sports, didn't they, like skittles and bowls—"

"That's an idea," says I. "We could call the piece 'The Bump-off on the Bowling Green,' and Mrs. Fennell could appear in it as *The Merry Wives of Windsor.*"

"*Et moi,*" exclaims Chérie, "I might could be the *Cleopatra,* not?"

"Hardly in the same show with the *Merry Wives,*" I tells her. "You could be *Ann Boleyn,* though. That would fit nicely into a play about bowlin'."

"Besides," goes on Mrs. Fennell, *(Please turn to page 104)*

Manhattan Mirage

By Sophie Kerr

The author of "The Poor Rich" here follows the strange and fascinating fortunes of an American family which turned its back on "home" to seek wealth and social position in New York.

Illustrated by Marshall Frantz



The Story So Far:

"IT'S simply screaming, Nancy," said Ariana Wood. "Vivie showed me her string of pearls, and of course the minute I looked at them, I knew they were artificial. Imagine—wearing artificial pearls!"

Here at Miss Ruggles' old-fashioned New England school Nancy Reyburn was getting her first glimpse of the glitter of Gotham from her new roommate. And when her mother was driving her home for the week-end, Nancy said:

"Mother, I do wish Dad made more money."

Effie considered. "You never said that before, Nancy. Is there something special you want?"

"It's the whole thing. Oh, we have a nice-enough house, and a cook and a second girl, and two cars, if you call this a car, and Father's vice-president and manager of the bank, and I have as good clothes as the other girls—but I'd like real luxury—I'd like a big French limousine with a chauffeur in livery; I'd like lots of servants, and—and I'd like real pearls."

Effie considered again, very seriously. "I'd rather enjoy all those things too," she said at last. "But we haven't got them, and we probably never will have them, and I'm not going to let what I can't have spoil what I have—and I hope you wont, either."

They dropped the subject then; and in the afternoon they went with Nancy's father Walter Reyburn, and a New York lawyer named Bishop who had brought a letter of introduction, to see Nancy's young brother James Terry play football. . . . .

But dissatisfaction struck more seriously at Effie Reyburn's happiness when Carl Pardee, an old suitor of hers, was given a big promotion in his bank, while her husband remained tied in his place by the ultra-conservative management of his superior John Parkinson. At length Reyburn's jealousy of Pardee and irritation with Parkinson culminated in an explosion, and he resigned.

There followed a blue time in the Reyburn household; finally Effie persuaded Walter to go alone to Georgia to recover his equilibrium, and presently she wrote, telling him that Parkinson had called, seeking reconciliation:

"But you are to do what you like, Walter," she said. "I don't want you ever to go back unless you know that you can force readjustments at the bank which will relieve you. My dear and love, we're not geared to any set standard of living; you must not feel that I and the children are a weight you must support in any required way or style. We're not going to bind ourselves by the rule of what other people do, or expect us to do. . . . ."

But two days later Walter himself burst excitedly into the house, crying: "Effie, my girl—what d'you think! I've got an offer to go to New York at sixty thousand a year! The minute it was settled I hopped a train—I've been traveling eighteen hours steady—to get home and tell you. It's one of the biggest banks in New York! Bishop was a scout, sent to look me over—we were long-distancing for nearly three hours Saturday night, after he found out where I was—and it's all settled, hard and fast! Sixty thousand, Effie! And more if I make good! I can buy Nancy her pearls, and you can have anything you want—anything! Sixty thousand! Say, what price Carl Pardee now!"

"Oh, Walter," she began; and then—involuntarily: "You never got my letter!" *(The story continues in detail:)*

"YOU don't act," grumbled Walter, "as if you were specially pleased."

"I don't suppose any woman acts specially pleased when she's swept away by a tornado! Walter, I never saw you so excited."

He had shaved, he had bathed, he had put on fresh clothes and come down to breakfast with a step suggestive of a hilarious youngster's prance. He was no more the agitated, distracted being of ten days ago. He was confident, buoyant; his voice had cheers in it; he held up his head and squared his shoulders. Effie was amused to see a defiant unbrushed lock at the back of his head.

"I never *was* so excited," he said. "Wait until I go down to the bank and break the news to Parkinson! He'll have apoplexy."

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"I can make my début in New York, just like Ariana, can't I, Mother? And we'll have a limousine and a French chauffeur—" "You're off your nut!" growled James Terry.

James Terry was devouring his breakfast, and listening, all ears. "Will I have to live in New York?" he asked.

"There or thereabouts," said Effie. "Unless you want us to leave you behind."

"When do we go?" was his next question.

"I don't know, exactly. When will we, Walter?"

"By the first of the year. I may go a week or two sooner."

"You mean you wont be home for Christmas?" pursued James Terry, with indignation. "Pete's sake, what's the use of having Christmas if all of us aren't here? Have a heart, Dad."

"Of course I'll be home for Christmas unless we all go down to New York to celebrate. That's an idea, Effie."

"Yeah, it's a poor idea," said James Terry gloomily. "But Nancy'd eat it up. I want my Christmas at home, not in any old New York. And I don't want to go there, either, till this year's school's over. I'll miss the class debates, and all the spring baseball, and I'm slated to be manager. Why can't I stay here and board somewhere till next June?"

"You'll be late to school," said Effie. "Hustle off, me lad. We'll decide what to do with you later. We're not in New York yet, you know."

"I wouldn't care if we never did go. It's a much overrated place, in my opinion," said James Terry. He rose, dabbed a quick boyish kiss on the top of his mother's head and hurried off.

"Isn't he funny!" said Effie. But Walter looked annoyed. "He doesn't realize what a great big thing it is," she went on quickly. "He only sees himself separated from his gang and his baseball."

"He's old enough to have more sense, I should say; but I suppose you can't expect too much. Nancy's the one who'll appreciate it. All the way coming home, Effie, I was thinking of what I could do now, for you and Nancy. I think I'll call up Nancy after breakfast and tell her."

"Better wait until evening; she wont do a bit of work today if she hears it now—she'll be too thrilled."

"Does it matter?" asked Walter. "What's one day's school work in a girl's life? Let her be thrilled. I am—and I wish you were."

"But Walter, I always knew you'd do something great; I've always expected it. And now that you've done it, and it's what you yourself like and want, I'm awfully happy about it; but I can't pretend that I'm greatly surprised, for I'm not."

He seemed scarcely to hear. "Gosh, I'd like to see Carl Pardee's face when he finds out! But I'm not going to tell it around yet; I've got to have an understanding with Parkinson."

"I wonder what he'll do. I feel a little sorry for him, though I know he doesn't deserve it."

"He brought it on himself. He's been a pig-headed old fool. I tell you, Effie, the business man who doesn't behave generously to the really valuable people who work for him is only laying up trouble for himself. If Parkinson had let me have the share I've earned in the bank, I'd never think of leaving him. As for what he'll do now—he can do either one of two things. He can amalgamate with the Merchants and Miners—I could put that over for him before I leave; or he can give young Willis my place, and go on in the same old way. But the bank'll slip

back, year after year, if he does. Willis is a good sound man, but he's no fighter, and you've got to fight if you work with Parkinson. My Lord, what it will mean to me to be with big men who're out for action! Take it from me, Effie, we're going straight to the top, now. This sixty-thousand-a-year job is only to get my toes in. I can do it; I know it. Look at Tate Gresham —he's made good down there, by dumb luck, chiefly."

Effie did not reply, and he went on: "We're going to have everything—everything! Palace on Fifth Avenue, picture gallery, yacht, country house, string of cars, the whole outfit. Your and Nancy's pictures in the papers, full accounts of all your parties in all the social columns—you've got your work cut out for you, as well as I. But you'll make good; I know that."

Effie sat looking at him, wondering where this Walter before her had been all these years. He had never appeared before. She did not know him, and she was bewildered by his presence. She had a painful feeling that he was running away from her, and that, no matter how swiftly she followed, she would never again be by his side. It made a shiver down her back, this feeling, and she jumped up and ran around to him.

"Oh, Walter, darling!" she cried. "My dear, my dear, we've been so happy—I couldn't bear it if this great change did anything to our happiness—I couldn't bear it—"

He put his arm around her and spoke as to a child. "What on earth! You do think up the queerest—why, Effie, you little foolish, we're going to be a million round golden dollars happier than we ever were before in our lives. Don't be sentimental and try that so-happy-and-so-poor gag, for heaven's sake. We're going to be somebody now."

She was checked, dismissed. She couldn't say, "But we are somebodies; we're a man and woman, loving and united and true, and that's enough for me," because she knew that it wasn't enough for Walter. And whatever Walter wanted, she must want, and whatever Walter asked her to do, she must do, for otherwise the spring of her life would be dry and barren.

SHE clamped down her emotions and went back to everyday matters. "Better phone Nancy, or she'll be in class."

"Yes, and then I'll hustle down to the bank and get things going with Parkinson. The sooner we're on our way, the better."

"But Walter, we've talked over nothing—I mean the practical end. What will we do with this house, and—"

"That's all up to you. We can take the best of the furniture, and we'll sell or rent, whichever comes along quickest. It's your property, you know, and you'll have to decide what to do with it." He cut her off smartly; he was detached and curt, and she had never seen his air of importance so exaggerated. Yet he had never seemed more alive, more confident, more contented. She listened while he telephoned to Nancy; his voice was gay, boyish. "Is that my girl? . . . . Of course I'm back—did you think I was telephoning from Georgia? . . . . Yes, I'm fine; everything's all right. . . . . Listen, I've some news for you. . . . . In a few days you can tell that high-hat roommate of yours that you're going to live in New York yourself. . . . . Oh, don't gargle your words. We're all going. . . . . I'm to be vice-president of a big New York bank and trust company. . . . . Gorgeous! I'll say it's gorgeous. . . . . Yes, a huge salary. . . . . I'm going to buy you that string of pearls. . . . . No, no, you can't come home and talk about it. . . . . Remember, you're to tell nobody at present, not a soul. . . . . Your mother thinks I'll ruin your studying for the whole week anyway by telling you; so you buckle down and fool her. . . . . Maybe we might. . . . . But Miss Ruggles frowns on extra visits from parents so severely, and I'm so afraid of her. . . . . Yes, yes. . . . . I don't know when we'll move, no. . . . . Be my good girl. . . . . No, no. . . . . No. . . . . No. . . . . Oh, run along, you scamp. . . . . No. . . . . Good-by—good-by!"

He came back smiling. "She simply had a fit! I told her not to let it cramp her studying, but I'm afraid it did. Say, Effie, I wish you wouldn't look so disturbed and sort of stunned about all this. Take it as a great adventure, can't you? And a great adventure everyone you know will envy you. I'm getting as much kick out of doubling Carl Pardee's salary, and leaving him in the backwoods of Drochester, as I am out of any other part of this business. Good-by, honey. I'll phone and let you know if I decide to give it out to the papers today. It'll depend on what Parkinson and I settle on. If I do announce it, you can call up Joan and tell her, yes, and Tessa Carter, and your club magnate, Mrs. Berger." He stuck his head in at the door to say a final word. "Maybe I wasn't the smart boy to hand in my resignation before I went away. That simplifies everything!"

EFFIE REYBURN walked around her house in a maze of conflicting emotion. "I ought to be ashamed," she thought, "when Walter's so glad about this, and it's come at a real psychological moment if there ever was one, that I can't feel elated and keyed-up about it. I don't understand myself. I ought to be waving banners and dancing in the street! But here I am sort of dumpish and stupid, and when I do try to say something appreciative to Walter, it sounds simply goofy! But it's very unsettling to think of being picked up, bag and baggage, to live in a new place. I ought to look at it as a great adventure, exactly as Walter says, but instead I'm appalled—and peevish and picky in my mind! We—" She sighed, regarded her familiar tables and chairs and pictures, and tried to imagine them in another setting. "I dare say we'll have to take an apartment; I've always heard that houses in New York were mostly old and cost like the very mischief. But I never did like apartments! I wonder if Walter would want to live in the suburbs; we might have a house there!"

Sarah entered disapprovingly. "Mrs. Reyburn, Helda would like to know if there was anything for lunch that would take much time to make, because it's almost ten o'clock."

Thus sternly recalled to her duties, Effie descended to the kitchen and made out her menus, and her orders. Both servants kept looking at her keenly, with disturbance in their eyes. They felt a breath of change in the house already; they read her unrest, and they had speculated together as to what had happened—had the Mister lost his money, or had he and the Madam quarreled, or what? Effie did not notice. But when she went out, Helda nodded to Sarah. "There's something up," she said. "She never said a word about the extra cream and butter!"

The telephone rang as Effie went upstairs, and she answered it. It was no less a person than Miss Ruggles. "Is that you, Effie?" she asked. "My dear, Nancy has developed such a painful and possibly dangerous toothache, I'm letting her take the ten o'clock to come home and have it treated. Will you meet her, or have some one do it? It so happened that I had no instructor or chaperon free to send with her, but since she is a senior girl and was going directly home, and seemed in such pain, I thought if you would meet her it would not matter, this once."

"I'll meet her, certainly," said Effie. "I'll go myself. I'm sorry you've been put out. When did her toothache commence? I thought her teeth were in good condition."

"It seems she has been suffering from the tooth all night. But she only came to me a few minutes ago, and I'm always so afraid of abscesses at the root tip since I had one myself, that I sent her off at once."

A gleam of suspicion entered Effie's mind, and grew bright. If Nancy had had such a toothache, she would certainly have mentioned it to Walter when he telephoned. Was it possible— But she must suspend judgment. She couldn't be sure until Nancy appeared.

"I'll take care of Nancy," she assured Miss Ruggles. "And I'll telephone to you if she must stay overnight. Otherwise she will be back this afternoon. I'll bring her. Don't have her on your mind."

She glanced at the clock, ran for her hat and coat. The trip down to the station in the Sizzling Teapot would take a good half-hour in the morning traffic, and Nancy's train took but half an hour from Haberton. She could make it if she hurried.

AND hurry she did. When Nancy walked out from the train, Effie was waiting for her, grave and disturbed. A radiant, exuberant Nancy flung herself upon her.

"Mother, angel, don't beat me!" she begged. "There's nothing the matter with my tooth, but I was so wild after Dad phoned I had to come home—I'd have died if I hadn't. Please, please, don't be cross. I promise I'll never do such a shameless trick again as long as I live, but can't you imagine, Mother—can't you *imagine!*"

"I suppose I can," granted Effie. "Though you know, Nancy, how I feel about lies and deception."

Nancy's glow was undimmed by this rebuke. "But, Mother, I'm not a liar and deceiver, hardly ever. You know I'm not. And if you say I must, I'll tell Miss Ruggles what I did, honest to goodness I will, even if she wont let me graduate. I don't care about graduating, anyway. When I think that we're going to live in New York—we're going to have heaps and heaps of money—Mother, it's too utterly splendid!"

"Better than going into the movies?"

"Why can't I do both? Mother, where will we live in New York? Ariana says that no one of consequence lives on the



Mr. Bishop said: "You'll find the absolute impersonality of New York very restful." And through the remainder of the luncheon he talked agreeably about music.

West Side. A West Side address, she says, simply gives you away as nobody. You know, Mother, I've talked with Ariana so much about New York that I feel I know it *very well.*"

"That ought to help," said Effie, concealing a smile. "We must try to live where we wont be nobody, but at the moment nothing's decided. Your father doesn't even know when he'll go. As soon as we have a date, we can begin to plan. You see, Nancy, this new position of your father's hasn't been announced yet. Until he says we may, we can't talk about it to anyone, except among ourselves. You didn't speak of it at school, did you?"

"I should say not. I was too occupied having the toothache and getting away without letting the Ruggles suspect me. Mother, can't I even tell Bruce, or Manie Gavin?"

It seemed to Effie that Manie was an afterthought. But she made no comment.

"No, not until your father says so. It would be rather flat if it leaked out and went all around town before the formal announcement in the newspapers."

They were at home. Nancy got out of the car rather disgustedly. "I really don't see why I rushed off like a wild Indian. It's so much tamer than I thought. You aren't excited, and I can't tell people. I might just as well have stayed at school."

"Yes, that's true. You'll have to go back after lunch, anyway."

"Will I have to tell the Ruggles the truth, Mother?"

"I'm going to leave that for you to decide. You're to do what you think is right."

"That's too mean and clever of you, Mother. That's positively horrid. Now I will have to do it."

Inside the house she threw down her hat and coat, stood about restlessly. "What on earth am I going to do? What are you going to do, Mother?"

"I'm going to finish addressing the envelopes for the Orphans' Home Maintenance Drive. You can help."

"But how can you settle down to anything? I can't."

"Look here, Nancy," said Effie. "Get yourself in hand. Moving to another city to live is nothing extraordinary. You're behaving like an excitable child, and I'm tired of it. Sit down



Blaine rushed forward to kiss Lora's languid hand. "Oh, you're more uniquely beautiful than ever!" he said.

now, and address some envelopes and let's have a little peace."

"I dare say I needed that," said Nancy, after a short silence. "Mother—you are clever." She thought a little while longer. "I'll bet Dad's not as cool as you are. I'll bet when he thinks of how he's put it over on old Mr. Parkinson, and Mr. Pardee, and all the rest of his crowd, he's simply ballooning all over the lot. Isn't he, Mother?"

"You ask him about that," replied Effie. "There's no reason why he shouldn't balloon if he likes. He's done a big thing."

Chapter Nine

WALTER had telephoned, "Coming home for lunch," and when he appeared, Nancy flew to meet him. "Dad!" she cried, seizing him. "Dad, isn't it too wonderful! Dad, I'm so thrilled I'm nearly crazy, and Mother's been making me be self-controlled and sensible. I'm so glad to see you, now I can be myself."

"But what are you doing at home?" asked Walter. "Anything the matter?"

She hung on his arm and explained. "I told the Ruggles I had a fearful toothache and got off to see the dentist. She has a toothache complex, you know. I had to see you and Mother or bust, I just had to. Oh, Dad, Dad, it's too gorgeous! It'll simply put out Mr. Pardee's right eye, wont it? He was so crazy about himself being made manager of the National! Well, he's only a little two-spot now! When can I tell people, Dad—"

It was, Effie saw, exactly what Walter wanted to hear. He expanded under it. He said nothing about Nancy's escape from school; evidently it didn't matter; he was rather pleased by it. "You can tell everybody, right off," he said. "I had it out with Parkinson this morning, and called up the afternoon papers, and they sent reporters over to get the whole thing. So go ahead and broadcast."

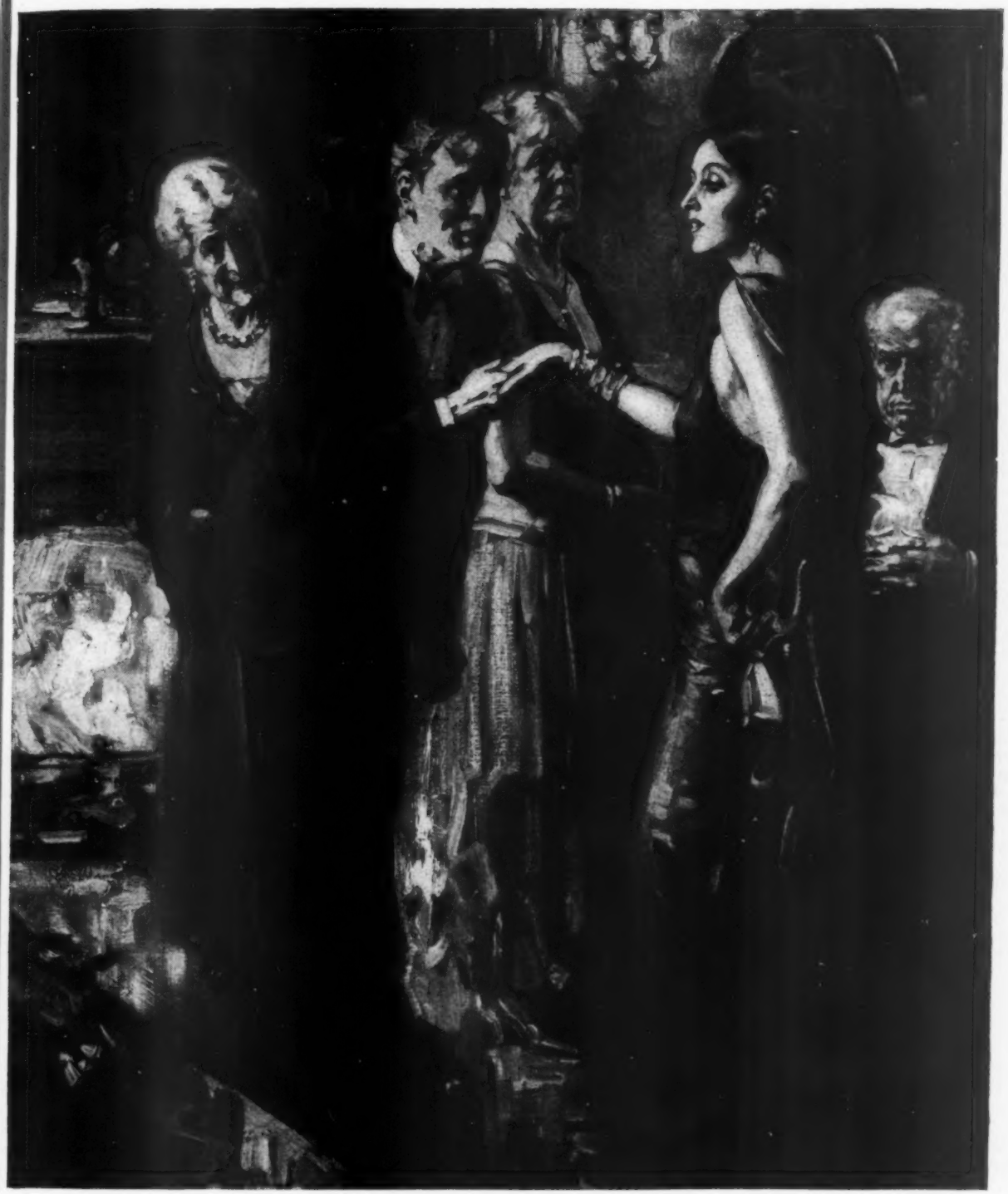
James Terry, coming in late to lunch, caught the last. "Nancy'll love that," he said. "She'll wear out the telephone line. 'Oh, Brucie, what d'you think,—'" he mimicked Nancy's voice. "I knew she'd eat this up. And it's not such a much, at that. Everybody knows Dad's a smart man; he might have been expected to pull off something swell."

"That's the way your mother feels," said Walter. "I can't get any enthusiasm out of her."

"You can get it out of me!" declared Nancy. "Dad, did you mean what you said about pearls? And Dad, can I go down to New York with you and Mother and help pick out a place to live? It's very important, you know. Oh, wait until I tell Ariana! This'll be one for her, all right."

"That's a fine, broad-minded way to look at it, only wanting to make your friends sore," said James Terry gloomily. "Me, I don't hold with such. And I don't want to go live in New York. I wish you'd leave me behind; I've been thinking about it all morning."

"Mother, Dad—suppress him! He's a bolshevik; he'll end by



waving the red flag. He doesn't want to live in New York! He's a perfect hick."

"I don't want to leave you behind, James T.," said Effie. "I couldn't get along without you. No, we'll all go together."

"I can make my début in New York, just like Ariana, can't I, Mother? And we'll have a limousine, and a French chauffeur, wont we—I mean for you and me? Dad will have a car of his own to go to business in. Oh, when will we go? I wont have to finish at Miss Ruggles', will I?"

"You're off your nut," growled James Terry. "You carry on like you were Mrs. Astorbilt, or something. I suppose you'll swap Bruce off for a foreign count or maybe a duke."

"It would be pleasant," said Effie, "if you two would listen and let your father have a chance to talk. I merely offer this as a suggestion."

Walter needed no further invitation to expand. He pushed aside his plate and told them about his new position, of all it would mean to him, and to them. He described Parkinson's jealousy and anger and dismay, and his own triumphing coolness. "For once I forced the old man to take his medicine," he declared. "I had him in a corner, and I made him squeal. I'm going back this afternoon and work on terms for a merger with the Merchants and Miners, and I'll sound them out. Lord, how he hates the idea! But it's better than trying to get along with Willis, and he knows it. He never would let me really train anybody for my work."

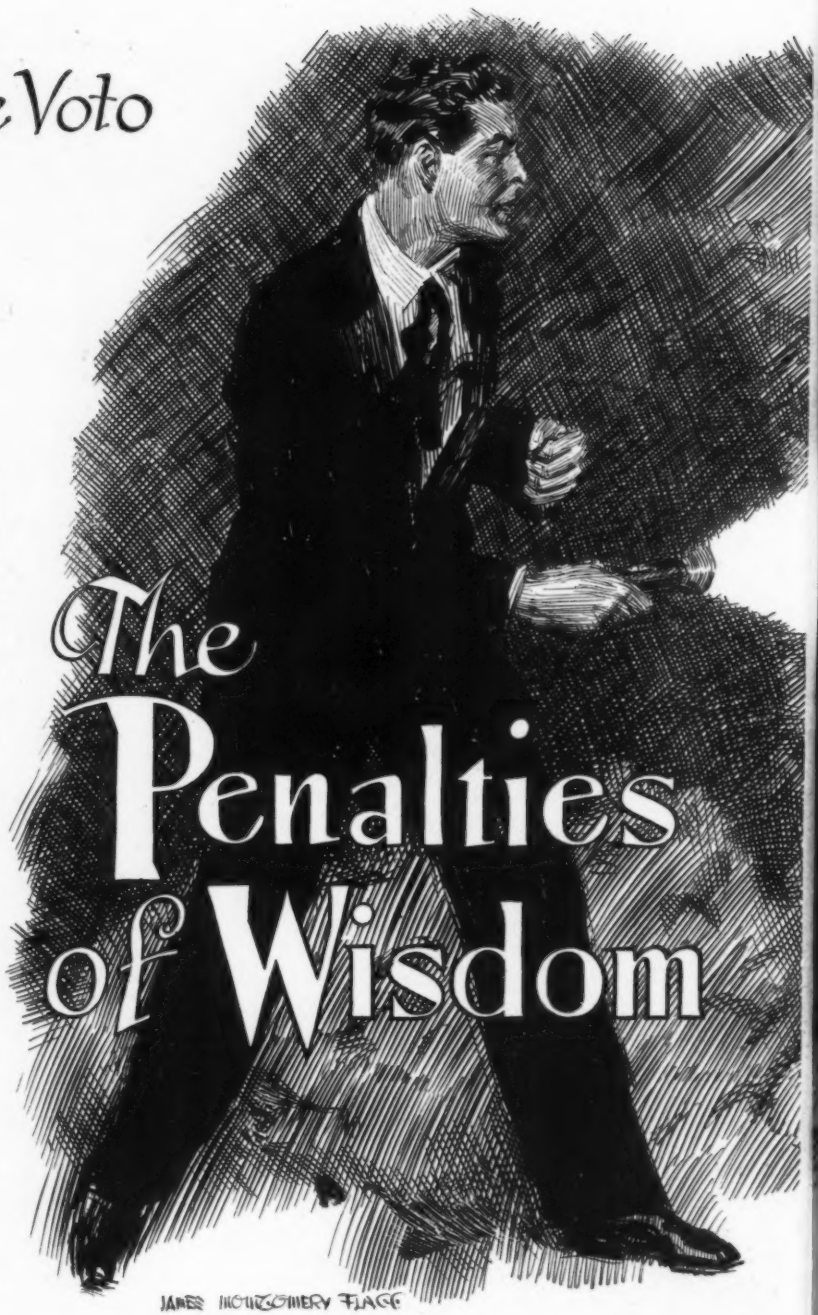
Sarah passed in and out, serving the meal, and Effie knew she was listening, and wondered if it mattered. Since their going was to be announced that afternoon, she must speak to the servants, give them a month's notice. Or would *(Please turn to page 122)*

By

Bernard DeVoto

Illustrated by
James Montgomery Flagg

The Penalties of Wisdom



The author of the gay-hearted "College Angel" and of "The Maddest of All Follies" is, as you may remember, a keen observer of the amusing contrasts in our high-speed modern life.

IT was too early for Nelle McMinn's guests to arrive; and so, attired with the formality that the city of Windsor affects, I went out to the veranda to watch the August sunset pale through carmine to lavender on the peaks. I had been back two weeks in the city of my birth, after some years' absence, without having lost my wonder in that remembered splendor. I was, tonight, very well content with Windsor: the satisfaction of a native who finds his memories less deceptive than he feared. I smoked a cigarette and was content with the infiltration of darkness, welling up from cañons, blotting out high ridges, thwarted here and there where the face of a high cliff still caught the sun.

Behind me an open window made barely audible the tread of Owyhee, Nelle McMinn's Kanaka house-man, assuring himself that the dinner-table was metropolitan. The Honorable Alexander McMinn, just now absent campaigning for his fifth term in the Senate, was sufficiently related to an aunt of mine to make his granddaughter my hostess in Windsor. I heard her, now, coming down the stairs. Her heels were staccato in the hall, but a telephone-bell arrested them.

Nelle's quiet voice floated through the open door. It was more animated after her first greeting of the person on the phone. "I don't believe you! You're running guns over the Mexican border, or else you're certainly in jail in Siam for attempting the life of the queen mother. . . . . But, Hump, dear, it isn't you here in Windsor—please be reasonable."

The allusions and the nickname summoned Humphrey Follen out of my forgetfulness. But he was only a name, only half-remembered stories about a younger, more spectacular man.

Nelle's voice became practical. "But my dear, you simply can't drop in from Zanzibar or Baluchistan and come to dinner on twenty minutes' notice. I'll have you tomorrow evening with a delight not at all tempered by the fact that I'll have to snub some of Alec's political allies to do it. I'll be—oh, I'll be the wistfulest *Elaine* you can imagine tomorrow night, and all your tales shall be of crimson blood. But you simply can't come tonight. I'm having Annis Paige and Jay Ashley. . . . . My cousin, of course—you may be old enough to remember him. . . . . Hump, earthquakes are your little brothers, I know, and you play with cyclones off the leash—but we're such quiet folk! Please don't insist."

She paused. And, frankly listening, I detected a new note when she spoke again. "I'm supposed to believe that Annis asked you to my dinner? That doesn't sound in the least like Annis, dear, but it's very Humphrey. . . . . All right, Hump. Only do, please, try to find some dinner clothes; and do, please, come right over. You've no idea how civilized Windsor gets when you're away."

Nelle came quietly out to the veranda and leaned against a sandstone pillar. Her shoulders rose from yellow chiffon that would have been lethal to most blondes. "One more for dinner," she said to the attentive Owyhee. "I'm sorry."

He bowed with the composure of the Kanaka and started away on noiseless heels. "I'm not so sorry as I thought." Nelle halted him. "Don't serve the brandy I brought you—Alec preserves some that's sixty years finer."

She sat beside me and accepted a cigarette. It had burned almost to the half-moon of lipstick at the tip before I was admitted to the preoccupation of her gray eyes.

"Is there any special reason why Humphrey Follen should revisit Windsor at this moment?"

"What moment is it?" I asked.

"The moment when one admits that Annis Paige's decision to marry copper doesn't necessarily mean the end of the old gods."

In Windsor there is a gulf surpassing the one that divides Beacon Hill from its Goths. Thirty years ago alien conquerors from the East invaded us and made copper dominant over our State. But, you must understand, there had been a gentry here for a half-century before copper. One does not inquire what portions of that gentry were hanged by vigilantes, or just why gentility went West in the first place. But the older Windsor had no toleration for the barons and overlords of copper.

Nelle dismissed the question before it had suggested to me more than a faint hint of something I had heard about.



Follen shouted: "Don't interfere, you fool — she'll drop!" The evening frock of Annis Paige slid downward, suffering audible damage.

"Hump Follen, of course," she said suddenly, "has a constant temperature of a hundred and six and eight-tenths. I mean, that's normal with him. He goes out to post a letter and interrupts a gang war. He takes a stroll to clear his head and bumps into a four-alarm fire. But that isn't what I mean."

She turned to me with an odd seriousness. "If you suddenly feel tonight that Owyhee is the secret agent of the Terrible Four plotting our death, or that there's a reek of murder in the table flowers, don't attribute it to Alec's brandy. It's merely Hump. He does that to people. He's fey."

"Meanwhile," I said, having partly filled in the skeleton of my memory, "ownership of a handful of shacks in Windsor's loveliest business district allows him to wander about at a high temperature."

Nelle laughed. "Don't try to give Hump a civic conscience. The Chamber of Commerce weeps over those buildings, but Hump disintegrates rules and by-laws." She laughed. "Already he has conjured Annis into asking him to my dinner."

Again her eyes were contemplative. "The worst is, Annis is one too."

"One what?" I demanded, impatient of cryptic remarks.

"Oh, one—one of those people who aren't able to feel the proper reverence for first mortgages and well-appointed teas. Everyone thought once—" She subsided.

"Yes?"

"Hump simply isn't a conforming person. Meanwhile, if everyone once thought that he and Annis were in love, she's found common sense to prove them mistaken again. And if no one can see how she can marry a human efficiency report—well, that's nobody's business—certainly not a hostess'."

She stood up, for through the August dusk headlights were coming up the drive. I had seen Annis Paige often, this visit; her fiancé considerably less. He was compact and trim, the type of young manager in the copper hierarchy that was held sacred by the ambitious. Life was a competitive business to him, one understood. He played tennis as combatively as he resisted a declining market, and he performed the social routine with the minute efficiency he demanded of his employees. He seemed utterly contained, utterly correct.

Annis Paige was too young for me to have remembered more than a little girl with high spirits and fleet ways. But the mature Annis required no earlier sanction. She came up the steps now, a deep blue cloak falling away from a white dress, and her short dark hair framed her face in the twilight—vital, disturbing, irresistibly lovely.

"My dear," she said, taking Nelle's arm, "I've done the unforgivable. It should have been the Gobi Desert that Hump Follen was walking on, but it wasn't—only Harney Street. So my heart dissolved away, and all my native conventionality, and I told him to come here."

"He informed me—he'll be here in a moment. It's all right, of course; I'm dreadfully glad."

"You didn't tell me, Annis," Jay Ashley said. "Today? Humphrey Follen? Isn't that the chap you—" His voice trailed away into silence.

Words are like that. You speak them without thinking, and there is hell to pay. Jay Ashley would have suffered mutilation rather than be indiscreet, and death, probably, rather than make a

scene. But each one of us finished his question, even I, Ashley having closed the circuit in my defective memory.

"Yes, Jay," Annis said. "That's the chap I spent a night with on a mountain."

Candle-light was a faint radiance, and a patch of sky above Mount Paul was smoldering opal with afterglow; and Annis Paige, the deep blue cloak trailing from one white shoulder, was looking at her fiancé. Her hair was dull black against the candle-shine, and one was aware that she had flung a challenge at Windsor's conformity.

The connivance of material things helped us over a rough place. A necklace of coral at Annis' throat chose that moment to break its clasp and make a clatter on the floor.

Ashley stooped to pick it up. It made a glimmer in his hands when he held it out to her. "My dear," he said softly, "I've asked you so often to let me give you pearls."

It was well done; and Nelle, who demands civilization, squeezed my arm approving him. Annis took the beads and forthrightly bit the clasp to make it hold. Her voice warmed. "They are part of the Paige corals, my dear—all the dowry I have. No, rich man, don't displace them. A thrifty Paige who was an envoy to the Commune bought this string from a *sans-culotte* for three of the first dollars. They had belonged to a royal courtesan, and she had no further use for them."

"Then," Ashley said, "if they are valuable, why don't you take better care of them?"

Annis' hands shone, fastening them at her throat. "I don't think the original owner was very cautious or provident. She wouldn't like me to do anything but wear them."

A staggering noise burst upon us, something between an airplane exhaust and a pneumatic riveter. Headlights flooded the veranda, and a dim hulk paused at the steps, shooting fire behind. Then there was quiet, and Humphrey Follen was coming toward Nelle with outstretched hands.

"My one Nelle!" he said. She is ordinarily cool and noncommittal, but she walked into his arms and lifted lips that would not be passive. He kissed her, and then, releasing her, took Annis' hand. He did not kiss Annis, but only took her nearer the window where candle-light stirred a faint glint of auburn in her dark hair.

"You're adult," he decided. "I feared so, this afternoon. You relinquish hope of roistering down the world to the dismay of the well-conducted. Well, mid-day does come, doesn't it?"

He shook my hand, and Nelle introduced Jay Ashley. I was led to anticipate sparks from their handclasp, but it was only a smooth gesture in the dusk.

Ashley said, "You're the local globe-trotter, aren't you?" with a bleakness that denied any possible irony.

And with equal negligence Follen said: "Only the local tumble-weed." And on the instant Owyhee was in the doorway announcing dinner.

Alert for the working of dark magic, I perceived none at the dinner-table. Candles burned without flicker in the windless August night, and the conversation of five people was desultory and contained, an amusement in which nothing urgent raised its head. And yet I was aware of a secret disturbance. Casual talk became momentous, as if it skirted the edge of something menacing. I saw Nelle's eyes dwelling on each of us in turn, and knew that she too sensed the strain. Thereupon I began scanning faces under cover of the talk. Follen's seemed wholly in repose. Annis' was, as always, a face of quietness and charm, vitalized but unaware. And then, looking at Ashley, I found the source of unrest, even while he talked. He bore himself with his habitual aloofness, but he was, behind the detachment, alert, forewarned, suspicious.

There was, after some time, mention of a dance that some one of importance in Windsor, a Mrs. Willett, was giving this evening, and an assumption that in due time we should all look in on it at the country club.

Follen stirred in his chair. "Which country club?" he asked.

"The Oquirrh," Annis said.

"Ah!"

The syllable had a drowsy acquiescence and could not possibly have been offensive. But wine-color swept over Annis' cheeks, and at once everyone understood. He had reminded us that the Oquirrh was the spectacularly sited club that copper millions had created.

"Oh," said Follen suddenly, "did you ever win a tennis championship, Annis?"

She shook her head. "Dozens of little tournaments. Never a big one."



"Sorry," he said, "but I haven't your experience at sleeping out on mountains." She replied slowly: "I think, Jay, it's perhaps time you did." Her arm made a sudden movement.

"Did you ever sail that dory to Newfoundland to assert your ancestry?"

"Sailing proved a little impracticable in the Rocky Mountains."

"Did you ever colonize yourself among the Apaches and find out just how a medicine-trance behaves?"

She was still smiling. "Another vision I've betrayed. You've no idea, Hump, how calamitous it's been to my adolescent dreams, this getting adult. But I have lived within my income and been an impeccable young woman and learned how to conduct myself."

"I see," he said; "you've pursued amenity and become a success."

She shrugged, and I thought her eyes were grave, despite her smiling lips. "Well, my dear, if you will be constantly tramping off to see how the identical Windsor sun looks on the other side

of the world, don't expect people to remain faithful to your notions."

Ashley set down the liqueur glass he had been playing with, and Nelle's lower lip drew in to begin a remark doubtless designed to call the talk away from shoal water. But the Paige corals saved her the trouble by again slipping their catch and falling to Annis' lap. She laid them on the table, and the light glinted from exquisite chasings on old gold.

An exclamation of annoyance betrayed Ashley's strain.



"Do have a decent clasp put on them if you will wear them!"

"I'm afraid I will," she said.

They shimmered while with disciplined fingers and a butter-knife Follen made repairs. He tested his handiwork and gave the beads to Annis, who once more confidently fastened them at her throat.

"They're pretty but valueless," Ashley pointed out. "Now, pearls would mean something."

"My dear," she said serenely, "you could buy pearls for me. Could you perhaps buy an ancestor to give them romance?"

There was another blush at Nelle's dinner-table—and dark color surcharged with anger was not becoming to Jay Ashley.

We went to the veranda, now cavernous in the dark, and Owyhee glided among us with the superb brandy and cigarettes. Ashley, it developed, had the only patent lighter among us. Nelle's piquant face, by its flare, showed her accustomed poise. Ashley moved on to Annis and snapped the flint again. Her eyes were dark with an emotion that was not quite excitement and not quite mirth, but something indefinably related to each and tinged also with apprehension.

Five cigarette-ends burned in the darkness, glowing and receding with a slow fluctuation. August night, mountain night, lapped about the hillside crowned by Alec McMinn's house, and we were remote above the sprawling arcs of Windsor. No breeze stirred, and no sound reached us. It was the calm of deep summer, and no one intruded a voice till the first cigarette butt—it was Ashley's—made a parabola in the direction of the lawn.

Then, quite suddenly, Annis Paige said "Oh!" with an accent of delight bordering on ecstasy. In the darkness her white arm made a line pointing outward. On the tip of Mount Paul, indistinguishable against the sky except for its deeper blackness, a spot of vermilion glowed like a lesser cigarette.

"Boy Scouts," Hump Follen said. "Oh, they're upstanding, nice-mannered boys, and sanctioned by the best citizens. But when you organize the emotion that takes a boy up a mountain, you're apt to make it vulgar."

His cigarette imitated Ashley's, and in a moment he said: "One climbs a mountain on impulse, in obedience to one of those irrational currents that make orderly people furious." His voice dropped a tone or two. "Still, a fire on Mount Paul could be serviceable at times."

There was the sound of his long legs unfolding, and presently he stood at the stone balustrade. There was another sibilance in darkness, and a blur of white moved beside him.

"No one could possibly have foretold a storm," Annis said. In the darkness Nelle McMinn's hand found my arm and gripped it, making that calm voice queerly meaningful. "And it would have been very silly," Annis added, "to have tried to come home in the rain—by night—over half the cliffs in the Rockies."

"Write it down," Follen said dryly, "as perhaps the one sensible decision of my life—to wait for daylight."

"It's more sensible," Jay Ashley's voice joined the dialogue, "not to put oneself in a position where unpleasantness is possible."

"Sure," Follen agreed. "That's a complete creed. Only, my occasional wisdoms are always retrospective."

Annis said, drowsily: "It never rains any more."

She evoked laughter from Humphrey Follen, a laughter that, for no clear reason, made my pulses jump. "Of course it doesn't. It only rains on fools. Your luck has turned, my dear—you'll walk dry-shod all the rest of your life."

With sudden energy he came toward the rest of us in the dark. His voice seemed to leap at us, a deep, compelling insistence. "It's damned dark here. Who's for going out to find the moon?"

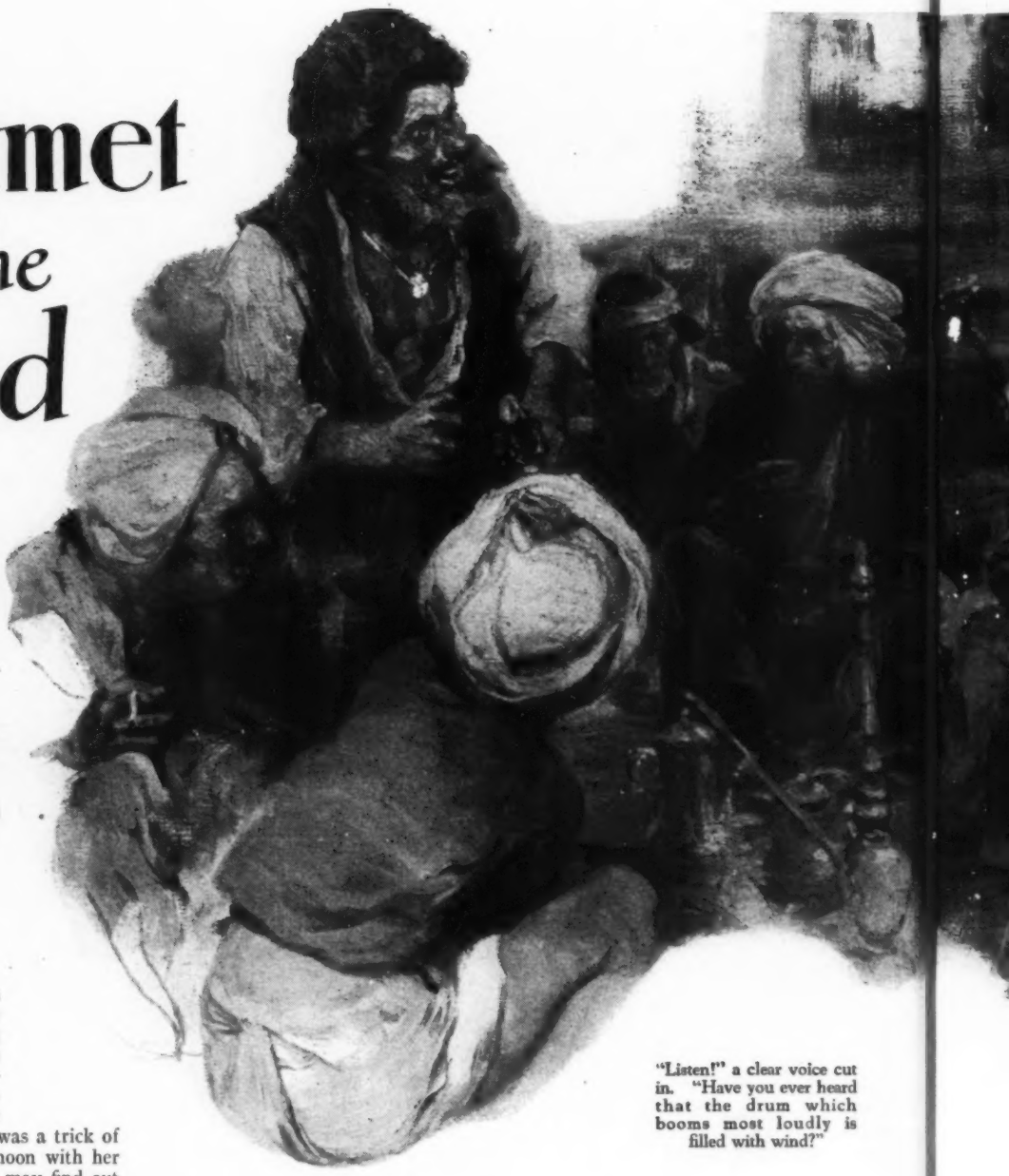
I suppose this quality in Hump *(Please turn to page 141)*

Mehmet the Red

By
Achmed Abdullah

who brings from his native land the wild, hot romance of a lover in the spring—"when all the wonderful new things happen."

Illustrated by
Arthur E. Becher



"Listen!" a clear voice cut in. "Have you ever heard that the drum which booms most loudly is filled with wind?"

PERHAPS one of these days there may be the telling how Mehmet el-Kabuli — Mehmet the Red, he was called because of his flame-colored beard—fell in love with the brown-eyed Persian girl, and since this falling in and out of love was a trick of his, ran away that same afternoon with her blue-eyed twin sister. Or you may find out that, crossing the brittle desert of High Tartary, he defeated the Afghan horse-thief's nine lusty, reckless sons—he alone and armed with nothing but a rawhide whip, and they with iron-bossed bucklers at their left elbows, and curved shimmering scimitars circling from their right wrists; or that he wrestled with a seven-foot copper-faced Manchu giant, tilting him upside down, putting him on his head, and with his fingers clasped about the other's ankles, twirled him around and around as a child spins a top; or that, on a dare, he eloped with a grand Indian maharajah's fourth and prettiest wife, quite forgetting that, in the shadow of the Mosque of Silver Spears, the blacksmith's young widow was waiting to keep her tryst with him.

Various other tales you may hear about this same Mehmet. Some fantastic and picaresque, some crude and prosy enough, some subtle and spiced.

But they must all stand by until I relate how on a fine sunny morning he took the road near Samarkand, striding along with a strut and swagger, in his hand a great straight naked blade which he used as a walking-stick, his red beard ahead of him like a lance, or when the wind veered, fluttering across his broad shoulder like a battle-flag. A woman kept step with him—indeed, there was nearly always a woman at his side or at his heel—and she was lithe and golden-skinned. Lawless she was, being of the Turkoman race.

Less than a month earlier he had come upon her. He had been about to pass when (was it the wind or a slim finger?) her veil had slipped, and (was it the fault of a dust-mote or of her own whim?) her eyelid had fluttered with the faintest wink in the world—but enough of a wink to bring him quickly to her side.

Boldly he had stared, had whispered: "Come with me!"

"Why should I?"

"Because I love you, O mouth of honey!"

"Why do you love me?"

"Because your locks are storm-dark as the parting of friends, and your smile bright as the noon when friends meet again. And as to your eyes, by my honor, the moon shines in them—though possibly it is your eyes which shine in the moon's glory. Come with me!"

"Where will you be going?"

"To put the seven hills, the seven plains and the seven moors below the soles of my feet!"

"And I shall follow the shadow of your feet, O strong man!"

So, lawless both, brooking no master but their passion, they had gone into the wilds, spending the nights on couches of springy spruce boughs with their toes to the crackling logs, and the days with their faces frankly to the sun or rain; and now suddenly he stopped and said to her:

"Choose your road!"



"But," she stammered, "your road is mine."

"No more." Left he pointed where the steppe rolled yellow toward Samarkand, then right where towering mountains tore the horizon with twisted peaks. "If you go east, I shall go west. If west you go, it is east for this burly man who is myself."

"Eh!" she exclaimed, amazed—yet more amazed when he continued:

"Why should we walk side by side, since the world is wide and I do not love you at all?"

"And only the other day you swore—"

"That I loved you. I know. And it was the truth. Now I love you no longer—the which is another truth for the hearing of your ears."

"At least you are honest," she admitted.

"More honest than you," he told her with a slow smile.

"You mean—"

"I mean that there was yesterday, in the village where they gave us such excellent mutton, a certain callow lad—"

"A handsome ruddy lad," she interrupted, "with a quirk in his eye I shall never forget. You—ah—you noticed?"

"Yes. And yesterday I came near to slitting his throat. But today I say go back to him—and the best of luck to you both!"

She turned.

"You will kiss me good-by?" she asked, over her shoulder, with a softly slurring voice.

"So that you may bite me or scratch my eyes out, or belike tickle my ribs with your short black knife? No, no, my dear. There will be no last kiss."

He laughed. So did she. With never a crack in her heart, never another glance at him, she took the eastern road, and he went west toward Samarkand, thinking:

"Here, Allah be praised, is this thing so neatly ended; and, Allah be blessed, was it not like sugar in my mouth while it lasted?"

And he thought:

"Spring it is. Blue spring and—ah, the very time of year when all the wonderful new things happen."

He spoke the last words out loud; and a passing Tartar drover heard and asked: "What things, O son of Adam?"

"Women's lips—that are yet to try!"

He tilted his shaggy fur cap over one ear. Steadily he kept on his way until, late in the afternoon, Samarkand loomed massive and purple against the scarlet of the sinking sun, and already evening was closing in with moist, creeping fingers when he stepped beneath the green-tiled Gate of the Lord of Lions. . . . .

Never before had Mehmet been in Samarkand. But he liked it at once—decided that it was a pleasant place where a keen man might find his fill of varied and startling adventures. Splendid mosques here, clawing at the sky with the hornlike peaks of their minarets. Low, flat-roofed houses, buried in flaunting gardens. Winding, sinuous alleys—as sinuous as a man's love, he thought, or a woman's hate. Cemeteries crisscrossed with Barbary fig, and the tiny stone cups filled with grain and water for the birds of passage. A spider's web of mazed, tangled bazaars where torches flickered an ever-shifting shadow-play on jewels and rugs, on clay pots and saddlery and stiff brocades. Stout barracks where Mongol mercenaries mounted guard. And in the distance, dominating the whole, the huge palace of the Grand Khans of High Tartary, the Grand Khans of the Golden Horde, the conquerors of India, China, half Russia.

A noisy, crowded, full-blooded town. Everywhere an extravagant interweaving of Central Asia's human tapestry; hawkish Afghans; scented Persian dandies in silken robes of rose-red and elfin-green; bare-legged, vulpine, ruffianly desert-men, lean shoulders looped in earth-brown folds of camel's wool; three Mongol

giants, arm in arm, drunk with opium, bawling a ribald gutter ballad; beggars squatting in posterns, half asleep, but still whining their eternal plaint: "Alms for the love of Allah!" Nobles of the Grand Khan's court with the ruffling urbanity of mincing gait and wanton eyes; women like soft, gliding phantoms, veiled from head to foot; street peddlers of a dozen incredible races, crying a dozen incredible wares:



They wrestled after the Tartar manner, in which there are no forbidden

"Tibetan incense! It cures and protects!"

"Poison—cheap, cheap—to bring quick death to your enemy, your neighbor's dog, your mother-in-law!"

"Trade with me, O Moslems! Trade with honest Abdullah, the father and mother of all cut-rates!"

"Drugs! Elegant Chinese drugs—to strengthen you."

"A slave for sale! Behold this slave! Black as night, strong as a bear, loyal as steel—nor a hearty eater!"

"Perfumes from Syria and Daghestan! Essence of apples in the sweetness of full summer! Essence of pears for the hushed afternoon! Here—smell—half a drop on the back of your hand, O mother of a thousand charms!"

"Oh, chick-peas! Oh, pips! To sharpen your teeth!"

"Lemonade! Lemonade! Sweet water—and gladden your soul!"

"Daggers! Daggers from Hindustan—from Persia—from the land of the heathen Franks!"

A turmoil of haggling buyers and traders mixed up with their goods as bees are with their honey. Jests—gossip—laughter—insults exchanged at the slightest provocation. And the tumult suddenly stilled when from a minaret drifted the melodious, sacerdotal chant of a muezzin calling the faithful to prayer:

"Hie ye to devotion! Hie ye to salvation! God is most great—"

On and on droned the chant, while from balcony and shop, from palace and hovel, chimed the multitude's answering, pious mutter:

"Here I am at Thy call, O Allah . . . . Here I am at Thy call."

"Here not I at Thy call!" commented Mehmet the Red. "For there is a more clamorous, growling call in this shriveled stomach of mine!"

Indeed he had not eaten since early morning and was ravenous. His purse was empty. It did not worry him. He had an idea, today as always, where his next meal would come from.

For he thought: "Money or no money, I still have my sword—than which, except for my shrewdness and good looks, I have no better friend on earth."

He looked about. Wealth was heaped in bazaar stalls. Wealth

tinkled in women's bracelets and anklets. Wealth clanked in men's waist-shawls. His nostrils sniffed, sensuously, greedily. His fingers itched. But he considered that this part of town—with its bright, clustering lights, its coiling throngs, and here and there muscular, crimson-turbaned policemen stalking about and enforcing the Grand Khan's orders with brass-tipped staves—was too dangerous for his lawless intentions.

"It is the truth," asserted Mehmet the Red.

"Then—what do you want?"

"Advice."

"Advice?"

"Nothing else." Mehmet the Red tapped his sword. "See this weapon?"

"A pretty blade," admitted the Turkoman. "You wish to sell it?"



holds, no fouls of any sort. There was suddenly a scream, a heave—

So, leaning against a wall, he watched and waited until a Turkoman passed, a lean, hook-nosed man with a swagger that rivaled his own; a man, Mehmet felt sure, who was not above putting large and hairy hands upon whatever he fancied of somebody else's possessions; a man, therefore, tolerant and understanding—a kindred soul.

"A word with you!" said Mehmet, stepping forward.

The other looked up suspiciously.

"Yes?" he drawled.

"I am hungry—and thirsty—and poor."

"A triple statement not of the slightest interest to me, O creature!"

"I am not begging for money."

"Nor does a flea desire blood, nor a dog a bone."

"No. I wish to use it."

"The Grand Khan needs soldiers."

"Doubtless. But I am a free man."

He stared at the stranger. The latter stared back, raised a discreet, questioning eyebrow, received a discreet, silent reply in Mehmet's steel-gray eyes narrowing sharply, and full red lips thinning cruelly—then pointed to a spot far in the west where, beyond the gates of Samarkand, sable shadows and dancing highlights rushed together in shimmering, heliotrope half-tones.

"Over there," he said, "look—the very place for you."

"And it is?"

"The quarter of the Hindus."

"The unbelievers." added Mehmet with a Moslem's automatic hypocrisy, "the infidels whose gods are *(Please turn to page 108)*

"Let's Do Something!"

The star of "Whoopee," and of many a "talkie," makes a personal appearance upon the page.

By Eddie Cantor

Illustrated by L. T. Holton



The guests may arm themselves with hammers or bread-knives; and then the host switches off the lights and the fun begins.

ON a cold, skiddy night when the wind is out with all his saxophones and automobiles are gracefully twining up telegraph poles, there is nothing like sitting with your back to an open fireplace holding high cards in all colors and bidding No Trumps. The tempest's anvil chorus can't disturb you then, unless your wife is your partner and has bid up your hand so that you just miss making it. Then, of course, the storm crashes in, the house collapses like a house of cards, and you go out into the icy night to embrace pneumonia with open arms. After all, any woman can have children, nurse you when you're sick and help you to succeed. The question is, can she finesse a trick, make a grand slam and win the rubber!

The great problem in all home-life today is not, "When do we eat?"—but having eaten, "What shall we do?" Playing is our most serious occupation. I know a doctor who got lockjaw yawning at a medical lecture, but he could stay awake seven days and seven nights to finish a chess game he started last Tuesday. A lot of collegians confine their mathematics to seven and eleven, while many engineers can play bridge sooner than build one. More energy is spent on games than we'd need to start a bus-line to Mars, and there's a bigger article in the encyclopedia on poker than on Newton.



"Dress Poker." Every time a player lost a pot, he had to add a piece of clothing.

Talking of poker, I think the next Britannica will carry a new wrinkle on the game that I invented, called "Dress Poker." I got the idea when I discovered that Strip Poker was not good for my pleurisy. Besides, Strip Poker is not a home game, and I like to do all my gambling in the bosom of my family, where I can lose on credit. So I cleaned up the game by dressing it. Every time a player lost a pot he had to add a piece of clothing instead of taking it off By the time I was ready to quit, I wore four raccoon coats, eight suits of underwear, nine hats and twelve pairs of pants. If I'd have lost another pot, they'd have had to wrap me in the rug.

But this game is too mild to play at house-parties. While traveling with my shows and being invited to many homes, I found that after a few drinks people expect something livelier than cards. So at one house-party in Chicago I suggested a little hat game which has since been called, "Indoor Chicago." It can be played in any well-to-do circle and always proves of great profit to somebody. All the valuables of those present are put into a hat until it is filled with jewels, money, watches, bracelets and rings. The various guests, if they don't happen to have their guns, may arm themselves with monkey-wrenches, hammers, empty milk-bottles or bread-knives; and then at a signal the host switches off the lights and the fun begins. This game provides plenty of excitement. There is always a lot of noise in the dark, a few shrieks and groans, and finally somebody comes out of the room with the hat. He is acclaimed the winner.

If you think this game is a little rough and you prefer to kill time instead of people, you will love an innocent diversion that I call, "Guess Who This Is!" To get the most out of this game, it should be played in the middle of the day during business hours. I find it works best about an hour before the stock-market closes. I get on the phone, call up a busy broker and say to him: "Guess who this is?" He usually drops everything and immediately starts to guess. But I don't let on. "What! You don't remember me?" I say in a sweet soprano. "Can't you tell by my voice?" Every once in a while we're cut off, but I call him back. "Are you very busy just now?" I inquire tenderly. "Well, I'll give you a hint. The third letter of my last name is *N*. . . . . What? You want me to go where?" When a group plays this game, each one needs a phone, and the one who can keep up the suspense longest and receives the most cuss-words wins. Girls are wonderful at this sport.

The modern tendency is to make a game of everything. We play at politics; we play the market; we even play with fire. People work for the reason that corks float, because they can't help it. But when it comes to playing, I know many a big business-man whom you can wake up at three in the morning to play a game of pinochle, or his wife lotto, or his boys marbles, and they'll look as industrious as if they were drafting a new world peace. But let the postman blow his whistle at eight to deliver a registered letter, and the same business-man will look dreamy-eyed out of the window as if he were seasick, and drop a shoe on his head.

Even the old kindergarten games have been revived and adapted by our playful grown-ups. The other night I saw some friends engage in "Blind Man's Buff." Instead of bandaging the player's eyes and twirling him around to make him dizzy, they let him try samples from different bootleggers. Each sample was first tested by inserting a copper coil into the bottle, and no liquor was fit to drink unless it dissolved the copper. They all drank to compete for a prize, and the first one to turn blind won the dog and pencils. Dissolving copper coils in liquor has it all over the old pastime of toasting marshmallows on the kitchen stove.



She peeks again and sees him

It's this innocent spirit of play that keeps us young. I know a

plumbing contractor who looks bilious and chews on the same cigar all week, but on Friday afternoon color comes to his cheeks, his office begins to bustle and everybody steps out of his way as if he were a runaway horse. He belongs to a week-end golf-club. All the work that he postponed for Friday and Saturday he now postpones for next Monday. He has the whole staff calling up and calling off people. His wife he leaves for the last.



"Eddie, I'd rather kill time with play than kill myself with work."

"Hello, Mamie!" He's all smiles on this side of the wire. "Something terrible happened here all of a sudden, dear, that I have no idea—I mean, you haven't. Of course, it's business! Imagine my luck! Just when I wanted so much to be with you, darling, they're calling me out of town! What do you think!"

"I think you'll come home," says the frigidaire.

He begins to perspire. "I can't neglect my business, Mamie! I've been looking forward to this game, I mean this contract!"

"You wont play golf this week!" comes the wholly irrelevant answer.

"Golf! Who even mentioned it? Beloved, are you getting soft in the head?"

"And hard in the heart," Mamie adds grimly. "Either you come home tonight, or I leave home tonight. What are you doing—a week-end business? What's the matter with Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday? Are they holidays?"

The plumber tries to put a sob into his voice, and you know how plumbers can sob.

"Mamie! Can't a hard-working man take off a week-end to meet a few pals—I mean customers—at a club—I mean an office—and play a few holes—I mean dig them—and lose a few dollars—I mean make them—aw—" Just when he's wrong, there's nothing wrong with the wire.



swinging his club and watching a ball fly through the window.

"So I'll expect you home," says the wife without bitterness, but without doubt. And that's his week-end.

He has to sit in the parlor and listen to the radio, and by some ironic fate he tunes in on a golf-lesson that a famous amateur champion is giving: "Broadly speaking, the idea of the game is to be farther from the ball after hitting it than before. When you take your stance, keep your eye on the ball and—" The plumbing-contractor's eyes grow moist. "Mamie," he pleads, "I wasn't built to be a martyr. For heaven's sake, let me run down to the club for a couple of hours."

"Well," she replies, beginning to yield, "we'll play a little lotto, for your sake."

"Ah, Mamie," he whines helplessly, "if you were a true wife, not a sheriff, you would give me my bag of clubs and a lunch-box and send me on my way with a kiss."

Mamie doesn't say a word. She goes into her room, stretches out on her bed and cries like a baby.

"What the deuce!" growls her husband. "You want to play lotto? I'll play you lotto!"

"So this is what became of you!" she blubbers, like a fish through water. "A loafer, a golfer, a liar and a gambler! If my mother could only see what I married!"

"Don't dig up any divots—I mean, graves. One lotto-player is enough! Mamie, these scenes are getting on my nerves. I'm so disgusted, I'll never hold a golf-stick again as long as I live. I'm going upstairs to take a nap, and the devil take it all!"

Don't you think she follows him, peeking through the keyhole, to see if he's practising putting in his room? And don't you think he is!

Late in the night she peeks again and sees him standing with a far-away look in his eye, dressed in his golfing togs, swinging his club in an arc and watching a ball fly through the window. "I made this one in par," he mumbles as he slings the bag of clubs over his shoulder, marks his card, and walks to the next hole near the floor lamp. The next morning she calls a policeman to break down the door, and when they finally

(Please turn to page 139)



Let the postman blow his whistle at eight to deliver a registered letter, and the business-man will drop a shoe on his head.



The Murder in

The methods of Lieutenant Valcour not only are original but are completely authentic —being, indeed, the actual methods of a highly successful operative known throughout the world under his own name.

Illustrated by Frederic R. Gruger



The Story So Far:

A CERTAIN influential man in the city of New York said to the Commissioner of Police one winter morning: "I need the best man you've got."

The Commissioner said: "I agree with you. You do."

"It will be difficult," the man said. "I can't advise. My natural, my normal inclination, frankly, is to kill; but we can't do that."

"No," the Commissioner said, "we can't do that. . . . . How about Valcour? He handled that Endicott business, you know."

The man frowned. "No one must know what he's up there for. There must be no publicity."

"There wont be any."

"It ought to be quick," the man added.

"It'll be quick," the Commissioner assured him. . . . .

In a house on the outskirts of Rogers Landing, near the shore of Lake Champlain, not long afterward, young Mrs. Hurme was telephoning a physician in a neighboring village:

"Hello. . . . . Oh, Dr. Harlan? . . . . This is Vera. . . . . Say, listen, Fred, you got to come over here right away. There's been an accident. It's our maid—Alice. She—I think she's been shot, Fred."

"Well, why didn't you say so? Every minute may count."

"I don't think you need break your neck. I think she's dead."

"But don't you know? Wasn't anyone there?"

"No, and there isn't any gun around. But there's a little hole in her back."

"Say, that's— Wait a minute, Vera—" She could hear him talking to some one near his end of the phone. Then his voice came back to her directly: "Listen, Vera: Valcour's offered to come, too. He's a police detective from the city. He's stopping up here for his health."

"Detective? Why bring a detective, Fred?"

But Fred had hung up. . . . .

The physician found Alice Tribeau by no means dead, for the bullet had glanced off a buckle and inflicted no very serious wound, though she was unconscious from shock. But Lieutenant Valcour's problem was more complex. Obviously Mrs. Hurme lied to him at first when she said Alice had been shot by her local sweetheart Harry Beaudrez, a milkman; for her story of a lovers' quarrel at a dance that evening was disproved by the absence of footprints in the new-fallen snow about the house; clearly no one had entered or left the house that evening before the arrival of Dr. Harlan and himself.

Apparently Mrs. Hurme had lied also about finding Alice lying at the foot of the stairs. There were no marks of blood or its removal there, though there were such signs on the dining-room floor. Moreover—and this seemed a significant thing—Alice had been wearing a dress of Vera's, recently given her, and the two women were of similar build and coloring. . . . . Valcour found, too, in the kitchen sink, a washed-off label from a bottle which had contained poison.

From his further talk with Mrs. Hurme, Valcour pictured a strange unhappy household: a woman of vulgar mind and antecedents married into an austere New England family, disappointed in learning she had not thereby acquired wealth, and solacing herself for the waning affection of disillusioned Will Hurme by casual flirtations with Dr. Harlan and an army officer. The presiding genius of the house, Will's father, was ill.

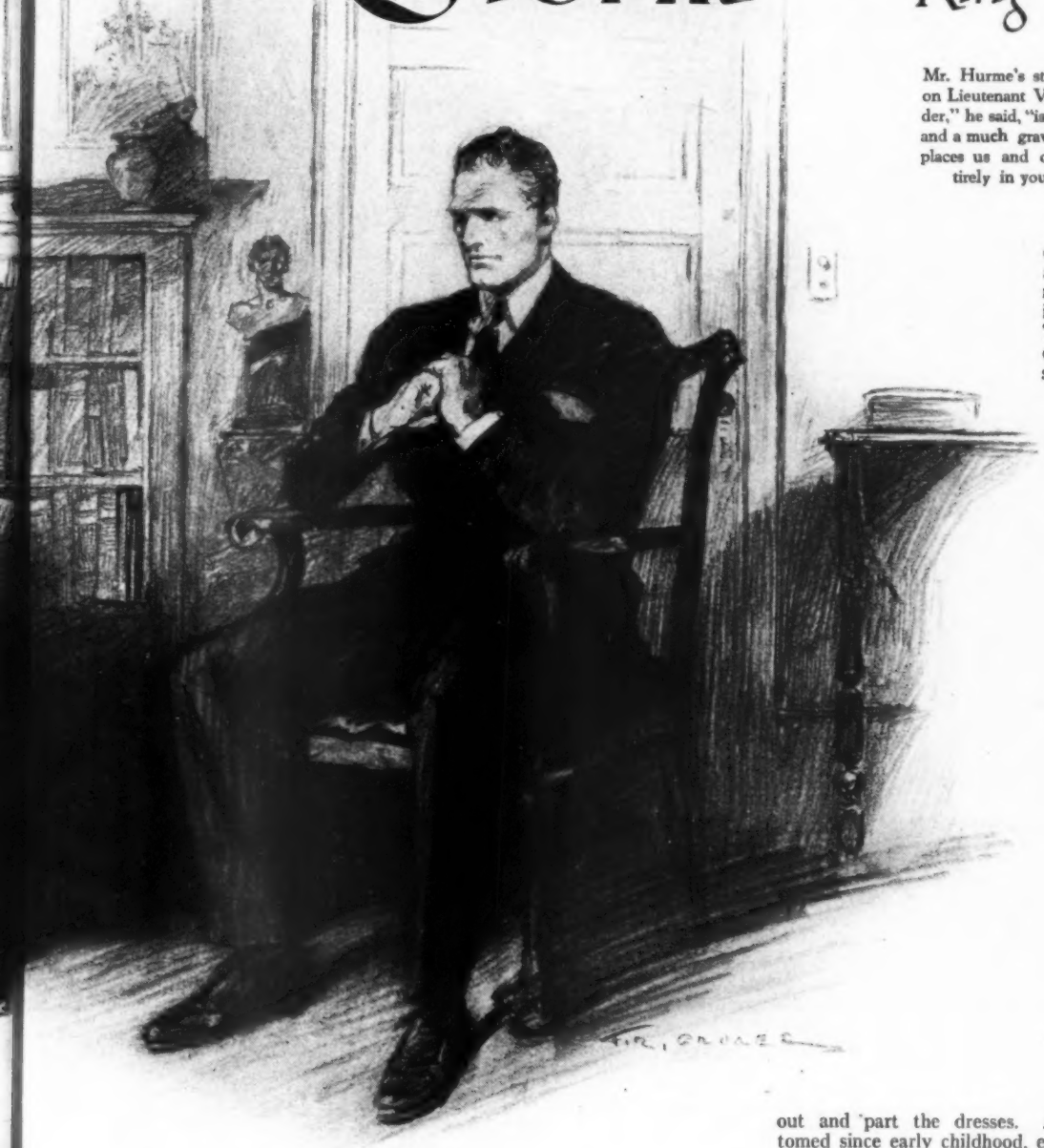
When Valcour had left her—he went to talk with Will Hurme, who was drinking heavily—Vera went straight to her room and to a certain red lacquer box. Valcour would search the house, she knew—and she therefore burned most of the letters in the box and h'd the others in the back of a picture. Later Valcour reported to Dr. Harlan: "Will Hurme seems obsessed with the

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in the Storm

By Rufus King



Mr. Hurme's stare fell lightly on Lieutenant Valcour. "Murder," he said, "is a grave charge and a much graver offense. It places us and our house entirely in your hands."

idea that his wife is killing his father. Oh, not physically, but by preying upon him mentally and emotionally, a sort of sapping-the-life-out-of-him idea. It's probably all nonsense. But the fact that Will Hurme believes it, isn't nonsense. It's dangerous—all obsessions are dangerous."

They were interrupted by the sound of a fall, and hurrying to Will's room found Vera there, her lip bleeding.

"He hit me on my mouth and knocked me down," Vera explained. "You—and Fred, too—I'll want you both as witnesses. I'm seeing a lawyer in the morning about getting a divorce." But when the elder Hurme appeared, Vera's fury calmed strangely. And—as Valcour observed to Harlan: "Apart from the fact that Will's whole character and breeding preclude it, there was that blood on the bedpost where she had struck her lip and cut it. He might kill her, yes, but never strike her."

Valcour and Harlan decided to remain awake the rest of the night—the physician in a chair near Alice Tribeau's door, Valcour on a couch outside Vera's.

Alone in her room, Vera planned, as she undressed, the departure she had decided on for next morning. She stepped to the wardrobe for a dressing gown, and felt about among her dresses for bedroom slippers. .... Her fingers probed farther and closed over something unyielding. It occurred to her that the object felt like a shoe with a foot in it.

A muscular reaction left her standing. A paralysis of fear held her rigid. She wanted to call out, "Mr. Valcour—Mr. Valcour!" but her throat was too dry. She forced herself by a sheer physical effort to reach out and part the dresses. A phrase, unaccustomed since early childhood, escaped in a whisper from her lips: "Little Mother of Jesus!"

Her eyes were dazzled by a slender, delicate arc of steel. *"You!"* .... Her mouth was twisted for a scream, but there was no sound, and the wrench did not hurt her swollen lip. She was dead, and could no longer feel the pain of any hurt. *(The story continues in detail:)*

LIEUTENANT VALCOUR settled himself on the lounge with the sensations of an uneasy sheep-dog. To the extent of his ability, his flock was safe in shelter for the night. He considered that Vera and Alice Tribeau were his flock. The vagueness, the distressing indefinableness of the situation irritated him. He couldn't go charging about like an autocratic seeress, no matter how keenly he felt the strength of his own presentiments. He would have liked to put Mr. Hurme and Will Hurme under lock and key, and sat up for the balance of the night with Dr. Harlan and the two women, playing bridge. He smiled at the absurdity, but the basic principles of the desire remained.

He fixed the pillow so that he was half sitting up, his legs stretched out, and the blanket comfortably tucked in about them. The window was cold at his left, and through it there was nothing to see but snow falling so thickly that flakes seemed to crowd past each other in their eagerness to join the drifts.

AT his right was the large well of the curving stair, and directly before him was the door to Vera's room. He could trace her movements through the faint sound of her slippers when they crossed bare places on the floor. He heard the scrape of a chair, and then there was no further sound. He pictured Vera sitting down—sitting down with her climax. He wondered how many climaxes there had been in her young and stormy life, and how many greater climaxes she had caused in the lives of others.

The lights flickered an instant, sank low, then steadied to partial brightness. Wind from the south was increasing in unsteady gusts that belligerently hurried the already hurrying snow. A sharp crackling came from Vera's room. It startled him into half rising before he realized what it was and sank back again. He could picture the flicker of flames snapping freshly on her hearth. Except for them, everything was very still.

As to Vera's going in the morning, that would depend a great deal on Alice Tribeau. Attempted murder was attempted murder, no matter how casually or indifferently one cared to treat it. There was no reason why Alice should care to be casual about it. She would certainly bring charges, either definite or indefinite, and probably sue heavily for damages. It was a great country for rushing pell-mell into suits on even slender provocations. Vera, if not as a principal, at least as an important witness, would have to be detained. . . . .

Vera was up again. He could hear her slippers tapping faintly for an instant. . . . . No further sound. . . . . She would be lying down, perhaps, and reviewing in a feverish jumble the intense unpleasantness of the past hour. He wondered why he hadn't heard the bed creak. Old beds in ancient houses invariably creaked.

Valcour felt uncommonly nervous and was unable to attribute it entirely to nerves. It was stupid to be nervous. All Vera had to do was to call out, if for some inconceivable reason she wanted something.

He tried to interest his mind in several cases that were hanging fire down in the city while he was away. The Rosenblum shooting stepped forward preëminently. What a basket of eggs *that* was—its nerve-centers reaching to heavens-knows-where—a squalid little shooting forming an ugly blot against a background dimly painted with "distinguished" men. . . . . It was no use. Vera, and only Vera, was he thinking of.

And her slippers were clicking again. They stopped. Two sharp clicks, as if she had kicked her slippers off.

He sat bolt upright. No voice had spoken. There wasn't a single sound in the whole deathly hush of the night. He hadn't heard it, but he had felt it. He had felt somebody calling him—"Mr. Valcour—Mr. Valcour!" He sat very stiff, very still, while the silence brooded heavily undisturbed. He leaned back again uneasily upon the pillow, and the curious force that had invaded him ceased. It had been like a thread drawing him toward something or somebody, and the thread had snapped.

Indigestion, he reflected, was the basis of most unpleasant emotions (probably a chronic state with most soothsayers), and for the next five minutes he exerted a determined effort to compose himself. He had partially succeeded in doing so, when a sudden crash of breaking glass from downstairs brought him with a jerk to his feet.

GLASS didn't crash unless somebody broke it. There must be somebody downstairs, but there could be nobody downstairs. The sound had come from the entrance hall. A branch might have flung against a window-pane, but there were no trees near enough for that, and the wind wasn't strong enough to carry a broken branch as far as that. . . . . The sound of the little crash was swallowed up most quickly. He took his flashlight from one pocket, and from another, his gun. Suppose there *should* have been—still be—a stranger in the house. . . . . He rapped gently on the panels of Vera's door and called softly: "Are you all right, Mrs. Hurme?"

"Yes." The word came stiltedly, but at once. He pictured, momentarily, her swollen lip.

"Your door is fastened, Mrs. Hurme?"

"Yes."

Valcour felt a little reassured. He switched on the flashlight and started to descend the curving stairs. With every step he sank deeper into darkness, the cone of his flashlight cutting it more incisively, more brightly. He reached the level of the entrance hall and flashed the light around. Its furnishings stared back at him blankly. He illumined the windows with the light, and in the southeastern one, there was a broken pane. Pieces of glass glinted back from the floor at its base. He went over to it. He poked the flashlight through the jagged hole and played it in arcs upon the surrounding surface of snow. There weren't any tracks. The beam penetrated the falling snow to a distance of at least twenty feet before murking off, and still there were no tracks.

Nothing had been thrown to break the glass, because there was no missile lying on the floor. He raised the lower sash and carefully studied the snowdrift where it clung to the foundation of the house. There was no hole or any depression where a rock or missile might have dropped after striking and breaking the pane—and yet the glass had unquestionably been smashed by being struck from the outside.

He closed the window and thought quite rapidly and clearly. . . . . Something must have been swung against the pane from above, from some window that had been opened up above—and the windows directly above were the windows to Vera's room.

Valcour ran with incredible swiftness for the curving stairs.

Chapter Fifteen

THE black quiet stairs, the dim and silent hall, mocked his stumbling haste emptily. Valcour twisted the knob of Vera's door, and the door opened readily. Light flooded the room. A chill draft hit him from an open window. Crumpled on the floor before the cupboard was Vera. He touched her. Her flesh was warm, but she did not breathe. He lifted her. Her body was surprisingly heavy. He placed it on the bed. Blood speckled his hand brightly. He slammed down the opened window, ran the length of the hall, and knocked sharply on the door of the maid's room.

"Dr. Harlan!"

"Yes?"

"Come at once—quickly!"

A bolt was drawn sharply. The door swung open.

"Valcour—you're pale, trembling."

"A shock, Doctor. Quick, take your bag and come with me to Mrs. Hurme's room."

"It's happened?" Dr. Harlan, in shirt-sleeves, was snatching up his bag.

"Yes—most damnable—I should have insisted. You see, I *knew*—"

They were in Vera's room, and Valcour had closed its door. Dr. Harlan was bending over Vera, snipping swiftly with scissors—a stethoscope—a curiously pale and ashen face turning to Valcour and saying: "She's dead."

They stood still, recovering themselves. They looked their fill of Vera. Her mouth was distorted from that unuttered scream. Her eyes were like glass eyes set in overwidened lids.

"Could you arrange things a little, Doctor?" Valcour said.

He turned away while Dr. Harlan busied himself with the body. He felt slightly ill. He knew perfectly well what, under ordinary circumstances, he ought to do: post guards at every exit, search the house immediately from top to bottom, question, at once, Will Hurme and his father—phone Headquarters for his corps of assistants. But the circumstances were not ordinary. Headquarters were practically four hundred miles away, and he did not believe that any inmate would attempt to pass the unguarded doors, and he did not believe the most immediate of searches (an almost impossible task at best) would uncover an intruder; and as for any instantaneous questioning of the Hurmes, he preferred very definitely to delay, for a moment, that questioning. . . . .

"Get a sheet or something, Valcour, will you? Try one of the beds in the guest-room."

Valcour went out into the hall. He smiled a little grimly at Mr. Hurme's closed door, at Will's closed door. Neither, apparently, had been disturbed from his sound and placid slumbers, and yet the past five minutes had not been practically silent ones. Some noise, some impression of electric excitement, must have carried behind the panels of those tight-shut doors.

He went to one of the beds in the guest-room and yanked off a sheet. He carried it back to Vera's room, shut the door, and handed the sheet to Dr. Harlan.

"It's an awful affair, Valcour."

"Quite an affair, Doctor."



"It fell right out of her fingers when I came into the kitchen. I saw the label and knew it was poison."

The white sheet was drawn over Vera like a final curtain.

"Shall I notify Will and Mr. Hurme?"

Valcour's smile was a little twisted. "I wonder whether it's necessary," he said.

"Certainly. Why not?"

Valcour realized that Dr. Harlan was using what he labeled as "surface" words—the automatic functioning of talk unlinked with directive thought. He explained patiently: "I doubt whether either of them can have fallen asleep. It hasn't been much more than twenty minutes since we left them with Vera in Will's room. They weren't even undressed."

"Well?"

Valcour shrugged. "A pane of glass has been broken; a window has been slammed shut; my knocking at your door was pretty sharp; our voices were scarcely whispers. . . . . It is possible that they heard none of those things, but does it seem natural?"

Dr. Harlan seemed still to be terribly shaken from shock. He was incapable of grasping accurately or quickly the significance of details. "Natural? I'm sure I don't follow you, Valcour."

Valcour became quite simple and direct. "It is unnatural that either Will or his father should not have been brought from their rooms. Neither one of them strikes me as being a physical coward, and each must be aware that something has happened. Sound travels with peculiar ease in this house." His tone became businesslike and stern. "Our position here has altered. It is no longer what we might term as semi-social. We are not investigating an indefinite shooting of minor consequences. We are in charge, Doctor, of a case of murder."

"Murder. I do not like the word, Valcour."

"We will go through with what I believe is the farce of notifying Mr. Hurme and his son in good time. In your opinion what caused Mrs. Hurme's death? You have been able to determine, haven't you?"

Dr. Harlan made an obvious effort to pull himself together. "A knife of some sort," he said. "It pierced the heart, and she died instantly. She never felt it at all."

"What type of knife would you say?"

"Very sharp and slender—a thin knife, Valcour."

"That's an unusual shape for ordinary usage. It sounds like a stiletto, or one of those sharp-pointed paper-file steels that are weighted at the bottom."

Dr. Harlan was wiping perspiration from his face with a handkerchief. "That was probably it," he said.

"There wasn't anything near her, nothing in the nature of a weapon. Of course I really haven't had time to look carefully. We can figure out pretty well what happened."



Alice went down the hall and into Vera's room. Dr. Harlan was lifting a sheet, and under that sheet—She screamed.

"You can?"

"Why, yes, it should be simple, Doctor. Some one came in here while Mrs. Hurme and I were down in the kitchen getting coffee. We were there for quite a while, you know. You've noticed the drawers and things, haven't you?"

"Drawers?"

"Yes. That bureau there—take a look at it. Mrs. Hurme was undoubtedly a sloppy woman, but I don't think even she would have made such a mess. This dresser, here, was just gone through and nothing put back at all. Whoever was in here was looking for something that he wanted very badly."

"You said yourself Vera was sloppy—"

"This is beyond sloppiness, Doctor. It couldn't have been done, either, while Mrs. Hurme and I were downstairs. If it had been, Mrs. Hurme would have noticed it when she came back. He was probably looking through things, during that time, but doing so carefully and not disarranging anything. I think he was probably at it when he heard Mrs. Hurme and me coming upstairs. We talked a little on the way up. I remember her saying something about getting a pillow and blanket for me in the guest-room. I think the man in here heard us, and knew he couldn't get out without being seen." Valcour stared around the room. His eyes came to rest on the cupboard. He nodded toward it. "I imagine that's where he hid himself. She must have gone to it to get something—that wrapper she has on, perhaps—and he killed her. It is extraordinarily confusing."

"What is?"

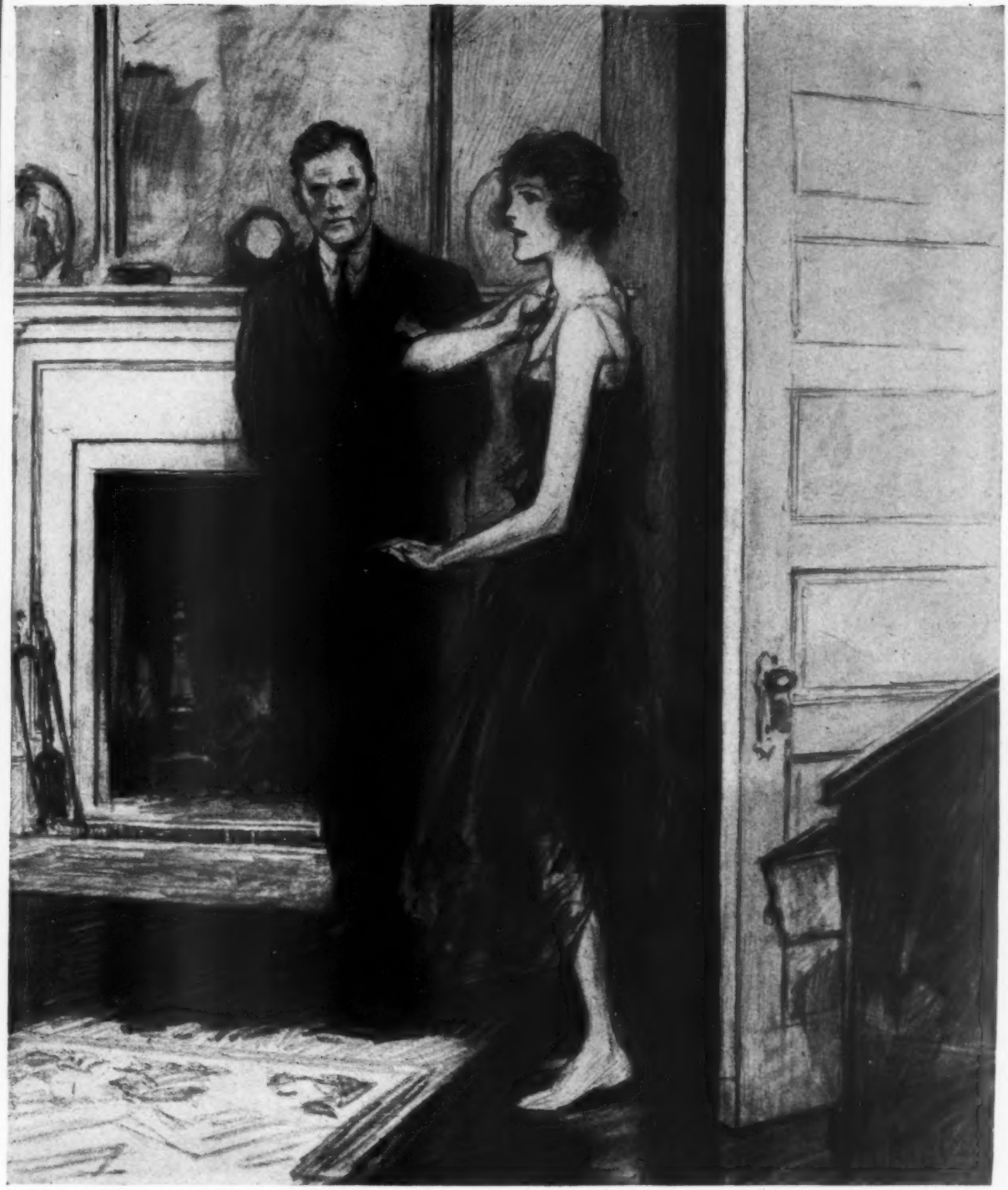
"Just why he killed her. I mean the question as to whether it was an impulsive murder, or premeditated. The fact that he was looking for something would tend to make it impulsive, the possible reaction of a person who has been trapped and kills in order to escape; to escape, in this case, either from denunciation or betrayal. I also doubt whether anyone who had deliberately set out to kill her would select either this room or this time. On the other hand, the weapon argues premeditation."

"How?"

"People rarely carry lethal knives about with them, Doctor, unless they expect to use them. They're offensive weapons nowadays, rather than defensive. Then there's another important consideration, and that's the temperature of the crime."

"Temperature?"

"Yes; I don't know how else to express it. The emotional heat of the criminal, perhaps makes it clearer. If a person's mentally blind with emotion,—the emotion of fear, or rage, or hate, or even love,—he ceases temporarily to be a reasoning person and reverts to basic elements. He becomes an animal. That happens, at its extreme point, when a man kills another man in the presence of known witnesses. I think this mess was made after he had killed her. He was very silent about it, because I heard nothing. But he must have been rather excited and in a desperate hurry. Maybe he found what he wanted, and maybe he didn't. I wonder," Valcour ended softly, and his eyes were rather startled, "just what he wanted."



They stood away from the bed, but their eyes were absently drawn toward it, staring at the smooth white sheet, seeing Vera beneath it, strangely compelling even in death, and curiously vital in spite of her body's utter immobility. The wind was throbbing through the locust trees, and singing like sand against the blackened panes were streaming flakes of baffled snow.

Dr. Harlan shivered and drew a deep, unsatisfactory breath. "Let's hope this is all over soon," he said.

"There are several hours of this dreadful night left us, Doctor, before morning."

"Well, at any rate—" Dr. Harlan tried to coördinate confused impressions into a lucid sentence. "At any rate, any danger is over. What I mean is, no one is any longer in danger."

Valcour felt singularly queer. "Do you believe in abstruse forces?" he said.

Dr. Harlan looked at him sharply.

"You mean things that are beyond the knowledge of science?"

"Yes, forces that we know nothing about, but which we have the power to release." Valcour's tone was low but intensely compelling. "Murder, I think, is such a force. There is something of the juggernaut about it. The body of the victim and the act itself are nothing but results of it that we can touch and comprehend. But we cannot touch or comprehend the element itself of murder, and once it is loosed, it broods for a long time in the air. I feel it tonight, Doctor, still lingering in the air."

Dr. Harlan was thoroughly unnerved.

"We must stop it," he said. "We must stop talking like this—must do something."

Valcour smiled without humor. "I'm going," he said, "to the fountain-head of all knowledge."

"To what?"

"To Mr. Hurme."

Chapter Sixteen

MR. HURME did not rise. He sat, slender and severe in black silk, between the wings of a deep armchair. A book of poems rested on his lap, a tapered dead-white finger marking the place.

"Sit down, please, Mr. Valcour," he said.

"Thank you."

Valcour sat down and stared full into Mr. Hurme's face. It was undeniably patrician; a cameo done in cipher, the key to which had been thrown away many years ago.

"There was something you wished to see me about, sir?"

"It is rather unpleasant."

"This whole night has been thoroughly unpleasant, Mr. Valcour."

"It concerns your daughter-in-law, Mr. Hurme. She is dead."

Mr. Hurme was out of his chair. It was like a trick of levitation; there had been no perceptible use of any muscles, of any effort. There was no change in color, perhaps because his face was normally without color. The book of poems had fallen to the floor, and Valcour stood up to retrieve it.

"Thank you." Mr. Hurme took the book and then sat down again. "Permit me to rest for a moment," he said. "We must do everything as quietly as we can."

Valcour sat down again too. He wondered whether Mr. Hurme's little exhibition in registering shock had been natural, or simply Mr. Hurme's contribution of what seemed essential to the scene. He absorbed in silence the austere and immaculate quality of the room; it wasn't a well-dusted room; it was a room that never had any dust in it at all. He preferred to wait for Mr. Hurme to speak, to strike the keynote. He felt that any direct questioning of Mr. Hurme would be as bewildering, to the questioner, as a visit to the Delphic oracle. Two minutes passed heavily. It began to seem as if they were engaged in some strange duel of stillness. And then Mr. Hurme spoke.

"Do you believe in prayer, Mr. Valcour?" he said.

"Concretely?"

"Oh, most concretely: one prays for rain—it rains; one prays for drought—the heavens dry up. Do you believe in such prayer, sir?"

"Prayer is scarcely so direct in results."

"I thought so, too." Mr. Hurme's smile was very fleeting, and vanished instantly as he added: "Until tonight."

Valcour knew perfectly well what he meant: Mr. Hurme had bluntly been praying for Vera's death, and Vera was dead. Of course Vera, in that game, had had her innings too. It was simply that, metaphysically speaking, Mr. Hurme had got the jump on her. Had he also apportioned to himself the rôle of earthly agent to execute the behests of his own prayer? Mr. Hurme was speaking again.

"It is curious that in this house, of all houses, there should have been two women attacked—first Alice, and now Vera. I take it, sir, that her death was the result of an attack. Her health—her vitality—were astonishing. Disease or organic trouble would be out of the question. Her nature would preclude suicide."

"Suicide is quite out of the question, Mr. Hurme."

Mr. Hurme's stare fell lightly upon Lieutenant Valcour like two delicate probing fingers. "Murder," he said, "is a grave charge, and a very much graver offense. It places us and our house entirely in your hands. Might I ask what arrangements have been made?"

"There are none immediately essential, Mr. Hurme. Dr. Harlan is a deputy coroner, and can cover that angle of the case. He has made a perfunctory examination. In the morning, or as soon as the road has been plowed through to the village, he will have Mrs. Hurme taken to the local undertaker's and perform the necessary autopsy. I have been deputized, as I believe you know, by the district attorney's office. There is nothing the district attorney could personally do tonight. It would be impossible for him to get here before the first train comes through from the county-seat in the morning. I shall telephone him then." Valcour lighted a cigarette before adding: "During the balance of the night I shall try to collect such evidence as may exist on which to base an indictment for murder."

Mr. Hurme's stare continued its probing. "You are an intelligent man, Mr. Valcour," he said. "I, sir, am an intelligent man too. I shall not suggest absurdities. There is no stranger in this house. You know it; I know it. That leaves us with certain unpleasant facts to face."

"Very unpleasant, Mr. Hurme."

"You are not a married man, sir?"

"No."

"Then you are unacquainted with the demoralizing effects of having children—in my case, an only child. I am normally, Mr. Valcour, a moral and a law-abiding man. But there are no limits to which I would not go, either illegal or unmoral, to protect my son."

"I have not accused him, Mr. Hurme."

"Nor do I, sir, believe him guilty, but I am not a fool. Nor—to carry the matter to its banal limits—would I ever do anything so hackneyed as to confess my own possible guilt in an effort to shield him. I realize, of course, that he and I are the rational suspects."

"Possibly."

"There is no need of mincing matters with me. We are. Unless either the probability or the actual proof of guilt can be thrown upon some one else."

"I hope that it can be, Mr. Hurme."

"I will see that it shall be."

"Such a course would be difficult and decidedly unwise."

"I shall not take up the wisdom of it, but I can promise you it would not be difficult. Our discussion has no witness, Mr. Valcour, and until it is proved otherwise, my primary and public contention shall be that there *was* an intruder in this house."

Valcour did not smile. "You will, of course, do as you think best."

"You doubt my ability? Let me show you. This is a large house, and connected with its kitchen, as you may have observed, is a shed. To discover the ultimate hiding-places in this house would take several days. It would be almost impossible for one man, and a difficult task for two. An intruder could keep on the move, could hide from place to place. So I am afraid, Mr. Valcour," Mr. Hurme concluded softly, "that the district attorney will have a peculiarly difficult task in convincing a jury that there was no intruder in this house."

Valcour's smile was perfunctory. "There are other points of attack," he said.

"Oh, undoubtedly. I am simply trying to point out that it *could* be offered that an intruder who had entered the house for purposes of theft had been caught by Vera in her room, and that he had killed her and then escaped." Mr. Hurme, with a faint gesture, indicated falling snow. "His tracks would immediately be obliterated."

"He would himself be, Mr. Hurme."

"Not necessarily, sir. There are numerous methods of traveling over deep snow."

VALCOUR held a brief mental picture of the two sets of snowshoes hanging from the blackened beams of the kitchen. The thing was possible, of course. He wondered.

"We forget our prelude," he said.

"Prelude?" Mr. Hurme's eyebrows raised slightly.

"Yes. The shooting of Alice Tribeau. She was wearing a dress of Mrs. Hurme's. She would be similar in appearance, in poor light, to Mrs. Hurme. The two crimes, I believe, are linked."

Mr. Hurme's face looked the slightest bit tired. His erect body drooped almost imperceptibly, and the edge of his dominance was dulled a little.

"That is true, sir. We have neglected to take into consideration the shooting of Alice Tribeau. It offers you an extremely satisfactory premise."

"Would you mind telling me just what you know about it?"

"I should be glad to."

"Where were you during that general period of the evening, Mr. Hurme?"

"In the library, sir, reading."

"You heard Alice Tribeau come in?"

"Yes. I heard the front door close at, I should judge, about half-past nine."

"Could you see the front door?"

"My chair was in a corner made by the bend in the stairs. I could not see the front part of the house at all."

"But you feel certain it was Alice Tribeau who did come in?"

"It could have been no one else."

"Did you hear her voice, or anything?"

"No; I heard nothing but the opening and closing of the front door."

"Then you cannot definitely say it was Alice Tribeau or, if it were she, that she came in alone?"

"I could swear to neither of those things."

"Could you follow her movements?"

"I did not attempt to."

(Please turn to page 156)



Mr. Williams has watched, for many years, class follow class in our universities; here he tells the especial story of the newest generation, which today follows the youth who had the fun of smashing the toys of thought and custom given to him.

Today's Youth

Cartoons by George French

By Jesse Lynch Williams

THROUGHOUT the decade since the war, we have heard many enthusiastic tributes to the younger generation from the older generation, especially from fond mothers. "Oh, aren't these modern young people just splendid!" they exclaim. "So brave, so honest, so clear-sighted, so independent and fine! I believe in the new generation, don't you?"

Well, many of them mean it, and yet some of them, it is observed, while singing the praise of their offspring, are given to averting their eyes. Inwardly they are scared to death, poor dears, but valiantly declare their faith in public to hide the horror and alarm they feel in private. . . . . The younger generation is not the only one that is brave and splendid. Possibly some of these parents also deserve a tribute or two, while waiting at home during the long hours of the night, watching and wondering.

But here is something else, more recently observed. When these same parents are informed that a great change is taking place in the spirit of youth, they suddenly forget what they have just said. They eagerly grasp at this idea, clasp it to their bosoms and want to know all about it, no longer averting their eyes.

It is not surprising that so many of the older generation fail to see much difference between the so-called New Generation and the newest, because the most significant change is not on the surface. Skirts have become higher; does it not follow that morals have become lower? ("No," remarks a pessimistic friend, "they couldn't.")

In circles where manners and breeding count, even the most unobservant have noted that the young people of today are quieter, less strident, not so blatant in their defiance of authority as the noisy kids of yesterday. Distinctions between good taste and bad, recently banished, are returning. "A fine line of off-color stories" is no longer a high recommendation for a débutante. Not so many of the boys are drunk and disorderly at private dances. It is no longer funny to break the hostess' furniture. Even the quaint custom of gate-crashing is going out, like other old styles. Nearly all of the guests at parties given by our so-called best people are invited guests, strange as that may seem to certain members of the now rapidly ageing younger generation in parts of our wide land where the new fashion has not penetrated (as yet).

Moreover, dancing is decent in many places. You can sometimes see the light between partners. Even at college proms it is seldom necessary nowadays for the official chaperons to order girls off the floor or send them up to the dressing-room to put on more clothes. Encouraging signs of the times.

Most of the older generation, steadfastly watching and waiting for the inevitable turn in the tide, seemed to expect a reversion to the type of youth they had known when they were young themselves. "The pendulum is bound to swing back," they kept saying hopefully.

The pendulum has not swung back to the dignified humbug of the Victorian age, and let us hope it never will. Of course, there was something more than a belief in bunk in those dead days beyond recall; there was a belief in beauty too. Not so illusory as some of our grim young realists were inclined to believe! But we do not make progress by going backward. The vacillation of the pendulum causes the clock to go forward, but not time itself. It is too late now to go back to the nineties, whether you consider that period golden or yellow.

But the newest generation, the more intelligent of them, have made the great discovery that it is also quite too late to revert to savagery. Those recently young reactionaries, who called themselves advanced, failed to make very successful savages. Primitive instincts were entangled with civilized psychology. Modern man can, and often does, act like a savage, but he can't react like one. Too late.

I once heard it put this way by a member of the older generation, shocked at the dinner-table by the impiety of a youngster who had swallowed a whole glass of Mouton-Rothschild, '07, at a single gulp, as if the noble vintage had been mere bootleg stuff made the day before to cause a kick, instead of a rare old Bordeaux, maturing for years to bring—not a kick but a caress. This was shortly after the war.

"The trouble with you kids," he said in smiling reproof, "is that you are out for a good time and don't know the technique. You are utterly ignorant about the only two things that interest you—love and liquor. That must be why you usually look so unhappy—when not aware that we are observing you. You've picked up a lot of stuff about suppressions and inhibitions from the doctor books. You think the way to enjoy life is to let yourself go and not give a damn. I hate to discourage you, but even for a life of sybaritic enjoyment, you have to give a damn. Suppressions and inhibitions are necessary—not only for the benefit of society at large but for your own individual comfort and convenience. Having a good time is an art—and you know nothing about it.

"Don't flatter yourself that I'm interested in your morals," he added. "Your manners, either. I am not interested in you at all. You are not my children, thank God! But just from your own

point of view, you're a failure. You want a life of individualistic enjoyment, but you don't know how to get it. You don't even know how to drink. You just get drunk."

I don't know whether it did the young people any good or not, but I observed some of the younger ones listening with more respect than is commonly bestowed nowadays upon old people. Everyone past thirty is old.

In "A Preface to Morals" Walter Lippmann says: "What most distinguishes the generation who have approached maturity since the débacle of idealism at the end of the War is not their rebellion against the religion and moral code of their parents, but their disillusionment with their own rebellion."

True enough, they made the revolt revolting—even to themselves. But it is not the war-victims of that rebellion who will lead the counter-revolution. The flaming rebels of yesterday are burnt out, too tired, too disillusionized. The sad young men are now too old to see visions. They will remain faithful to their philosophy of futility.

The reform, when it comes—and there are signs of its beginning—will be effected not by the younger generation but by this youngest, when not so young. They will not have been brought to premature maturity through the shock and horror of a great war. Their intellectual and moral birth has been normal. No complications. Not a wasted generation. We expect great things of them.

They too believe that they have come into a civilization begun in superstition, still ruled by bunk, inspired by taboo and tyrannized by tradition. But they no longer consider it necessary to tell us so, at the top of their lungs. They take it for granted, just as they do the physiology and psychology of sex, and ask with a bored smile: "Yes, of course—what of it? Why get excited?"

That seems to be the keynote of the new spirit. What of it? What are we going to do about it? Where do we go from here? They don't know.

But they are going on from where the new generation left off—not from where the old generation left off. Just how far and in what direction is as yet a matter of interesting speculation.

During the last few years I have been a guest for short or long stays at certain of our largest universities, east and west. Since then I have returned to sojourn for a while among the scenes of my own college days at Princeton. Not being a teacher, I have learned a good deal. I have learned, for example, how little we graduates know about undergraduates. Perhaps it isn't possible to know much. Modern youth speaks a different language, standing on a different plane, looking at life from a different angle. Not the usual and recurrent gulf between fathers and sons. More than that.

There never was a period in our social evolution when two groups of human beings occupied the same globe at the same time with such utterly dissimilar notions as to what it is all about.

But here are a few general impressions of the modern undergraduate as seen by one old graduate.

First of all, then, a greater number than ever before, during or after the six years that I was a student myself, are doing what they are supposed to come to college for. The modern student studies. He has to work hard to get in and harder to stay in. The annual mortality at examinations is appalling. All that, to be sure, can be put down to compulsion from above. But here is the significant thing: So many of them are interested in their work. It is socially respectable to study hard. Even talking shop at the dinner-table is no longer considered bad form.

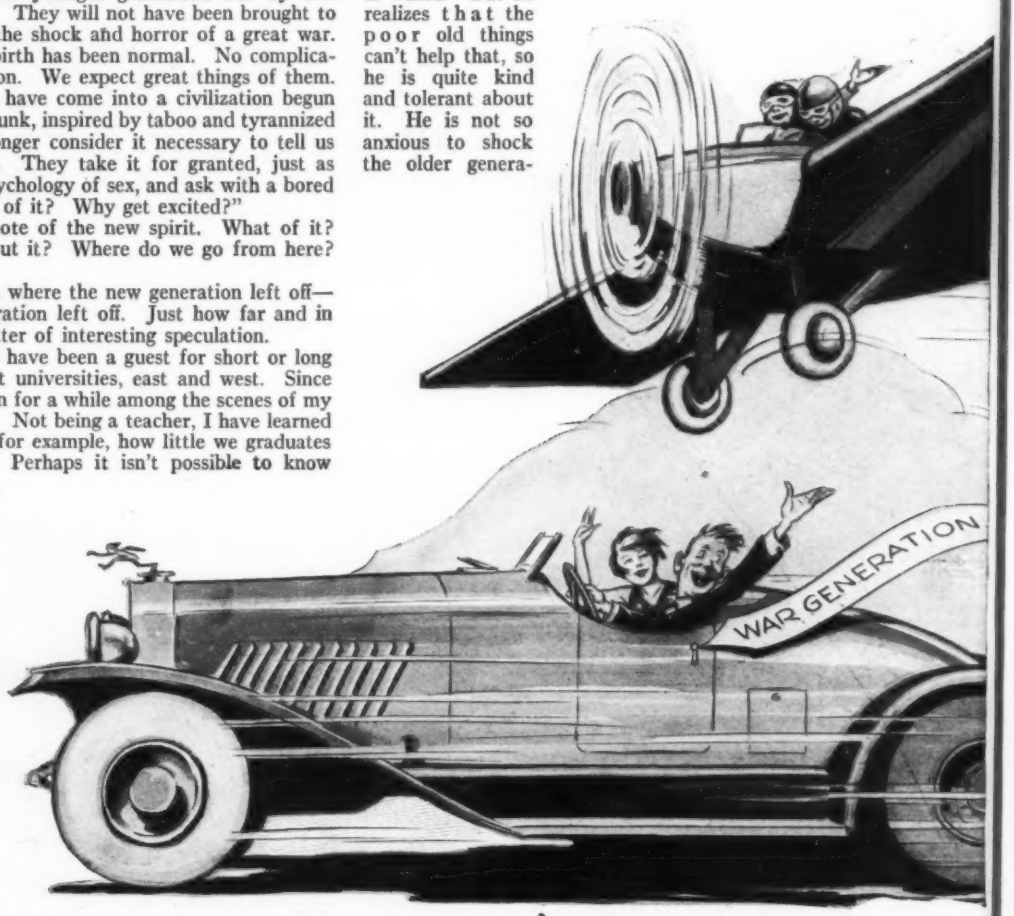
They not only work harder but they play more consistently. Instead of going down to watch the teams practice, they take athletic exercise themselves, and are therefore accused of disloyalty by the rah-rah type of alumni. It is the university custom now to keep fit, just as loafing was in the so-called good old days.

They not only study, but they think. They think wrong, according to the standards of many of their fathers, but they are using their God-given faculties all the same, for the purpose for which they were intended, instead of turning them into warehouses for receiving and forgetting secondhand intellectual furniture.

In short, our universities—some of them, at any rate—are no longer country clubs. They are becoming educational institutions, thus destroying the only true leisure class we ever had in America.

The student of today as compared with the student of a decade ago is more modest, less sure he is right; not so individualistic, less blatantly arrogant in his scorn of everything said and thought before he dawned upon a waiting world, than was the boy who came to college during or immediately after the war. (Do not be too hard on them. They were all war-victims whether they got into the fight or not.)

The college boy of today enters the presence of his elders without the cringing shyness of a forgotten age, and yet does not carry a chip on his shoulder. Indeed, he is very nice to his elders. Of course, he knows that they were nurtured on bologny—or was it applesauce? I don't know which is which. But he realizes that the poor old things can't help that, so he is quite kind and tolerant about it. He is not so anxious to shock the older generation. (Besides, it is not so easy as it used to be. The younger generation taught their parents so much. Evil influence of the younger generation on the older!)



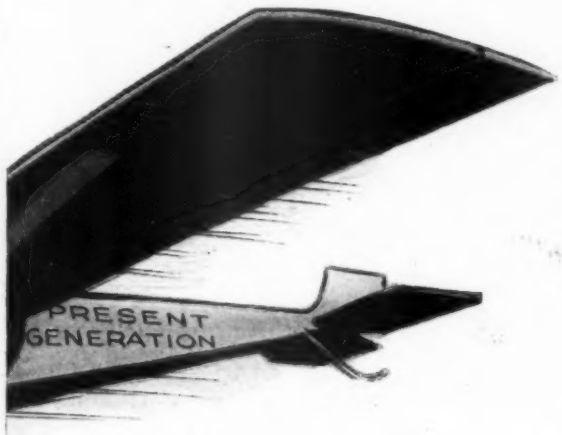
Though they travel in airplanes, "the young people of today are quieter, less strident, not so blatant in their defiance of authority as the noisy kids of yesterday. . . . The pendulum has not swung back to the dignified humbug of the Victorian age, and let us hope it never will."

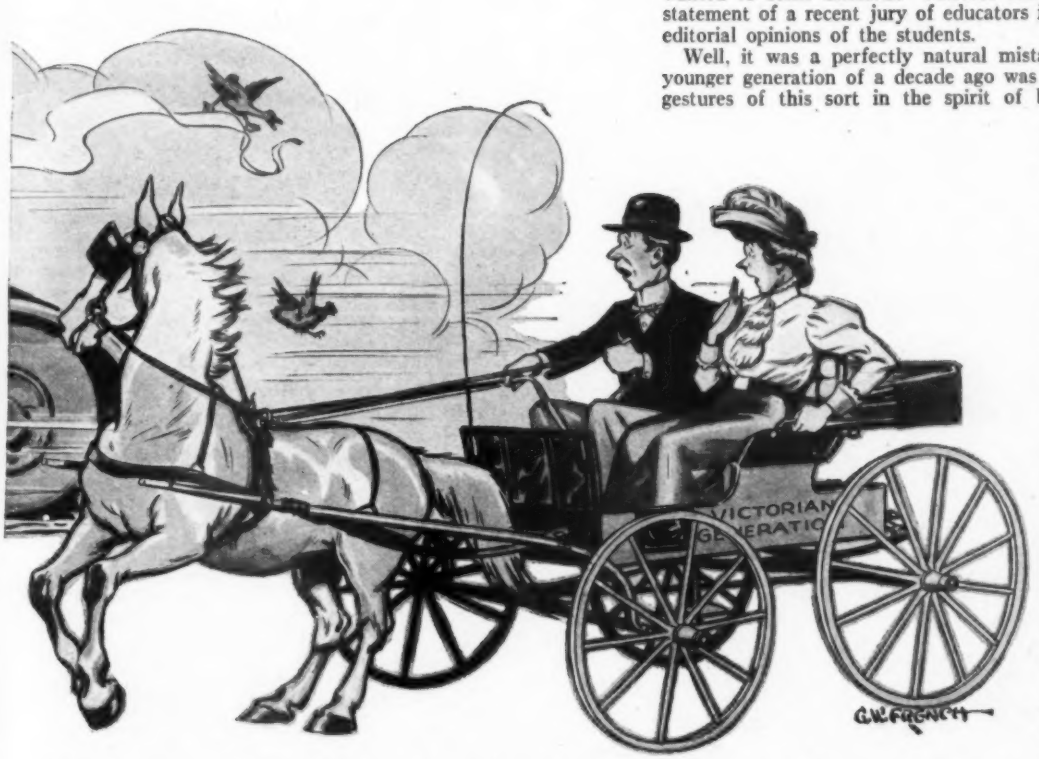
Some of them are beginning to look at organized society as an organism, not merely a congerie of individuals gathered together by the gregarious instinct, but all separate units, each a law unto himself. It has occurred to them at last that no one can be a complete individualist, except by living alone on a desert island.

H. L. Mencken is no longer their god. He may have been, a decade ago. Dean Gauss of Princeton tells me that the boys never mention Mencken's name now, except to smile at his vehemence in a manner of saying: "Why so hot, little man?" As one of them remarked to me: "A blunderbuss firing noisy shots into corpses."

By Jesse Lynch Williams

Freud, the high priest of the postwar period, is fading into the background, into his true perspective. A great scientist but not the only one. Besides, that is old stuff now, no longer the fashion. Freud announced his discovery in 1894. The nineties! Enough to discredit him. One cannot keep on being excited over every new discovery—after it becomes old. Airplanes hum overhead without making us look up. Those who now read Dr. Freud take up his later works, but with a critical squint. He has constructed an avenue leading towards idealism. Perhaps that's because he too is old. Ideals are no longer beacon-lights for youth, merely glowing embers for the warmth and comfort of senescence. Modern youth smiles at ideals, prefers ideas.





While I was preparing this article, the senior class at Princeton sent in their answers to the annual questionnaire for their class record. Some of them may seem perplexing, not to say contradictory, to the casual observer. For example, twice as many of these college boys would prefer the privilege of wearing a Phi Beta Kappa key, the sign of high attainment in scholarship, to the formerly most coveted honor of wearing the Varsity P, given only to athletes who make the teams in major sports. That may shock those of the alumni who have never grown up and therefore believe that the modern undergraduate is prematurely old, especially as this is not the first senior class in recent years that has so voted.

But what will a different sort of graduate think of this? These same overserious youths who rate high standing in the classroom above even the highest distinction in sports also voted by a still more overwhelming majority against Prohibition—not two to one, but eight to one. Moreover, in answer to the question, "What would you do if you ran the University?" three times as many voted for the abolition of compulsory chapel as for any other desired change or reform. No wonder the modern student is not understood by either type of old grad.

There recently appeared in the *Daily Princetonian*, the student's newspaper, a letter from an underclassman favoring Prohibition. The number of replies, sent in to the editors in rebuttal, indignant, incredulous or ironic, almost swamped the office. They had to publish an announcement begging their correspondents to stop it.

Whether he drinks or not, the average undergraduate of today does not believe in Prohibition. Moreover, the average undergraduate of today drinks.

"What is your favorite beverage?" was one of the questions for that class record. "Whisky, 104; beer, 79; milk, 3."

True, many of them did not commit themselves. But in answer to another question, "Do you drink?" the result was, "Yes—306; No—61." The three hundred and six includes some of the most serious-minded boys in the class.

The Rev. Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick, in a sermon delivered recently, announced that there was less drinking in the colleges than before Prohibition. He is a great preacher, but he didn't know what he was talking about. A case of "the will to believe." He cited Yale and Stanford as representative of the East and West. The Yale *News* and the Stanford *Daily* vigorously declined to accept the intended compliment. Their overwhelmingly forceful denials have since been backed up by the testimony of representatives of our other universities. In answer to this Dr. Fosdick replied lightly that the young journalists in our colleges merely wanted to seem dreadful. Another mistake. The authoritative statement of a recent jury of educators in Chicago confirmed the editorial opinions of the students.

Well, it was a perfectly natural mistake. He knew that the younger generation of a decade ago was given to making defiant gestures of this sort in the spirit of bravado. They enjoyed shocking the clergy. But since then times have changed. Undergraduate editors of this youngest generation are a different breed. They are not frivolous; they are serious as Dr. Fosdick would soon find out. They have the courage of their convictions and they have a great many convictions. The undergraduates of ten years ago had plenty of courage, but no convictions at all to speak of.

But despite or because of the Volstead Act, as suits your prejudices, at one of our colleges, according to a senior class census recently published, more of them actually drink than smoke. One of the professors there told me that it was worse than ever this year.

The question that concerns this article is—why? Have they no respect for authority? No belief in the majesty of the law?

The answer is "No." The next question is, "Who is to blame for that?"

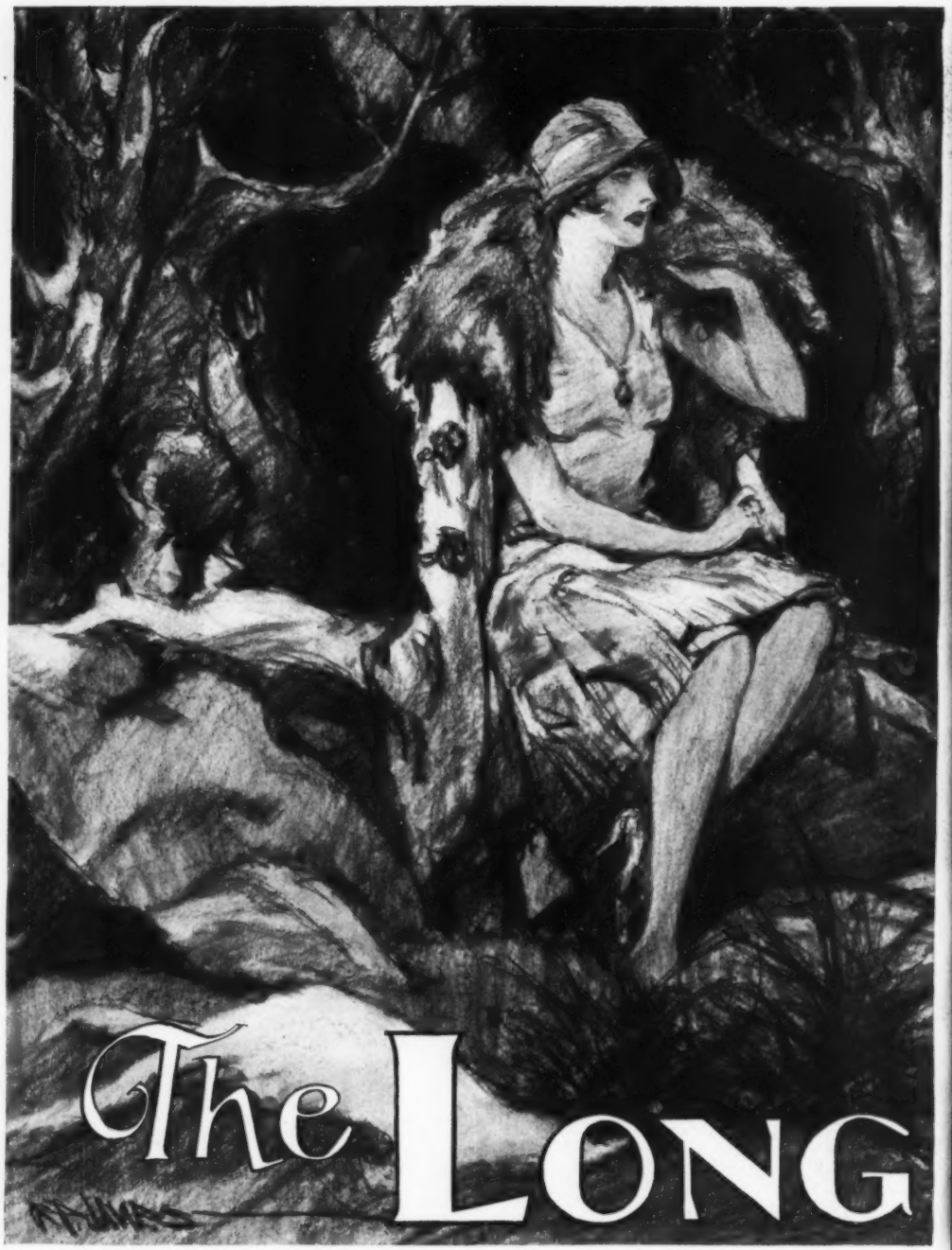
Here is a story told recently by a student about his own father, an eminent lawyer, who believes in Prohibition and consistently practices what he preaches. This time he was preaching on the sanctity of the law, one Sunday evening, *(Please turn to page 148)*

By

Frank R. Adams

Illustrated by
R. F. James

Mr. Adams, as you may recall, was co-author of that big musical success "The Time, the Place and the Girl" which is now showing in "sound" pictures; and also he wrote "Help Yourself to Happiness."



The LONG

THE police couldn't find Wilton MacRae, but I knew where to look. We had hidden there together as boys when he was an imaginary Jesse James and I was his less famous brother Frank.

It seemed strange to think we had ever been companions—I the most peaceable of men and he a well-known habitual law-breaker and now a killer.

I had traveled far from the North Peninsula since the days when Mac and I had pretended to hold a posse of a hundred men at bay there in the impregnable cavern which Lake Superior so kindly sheeted off from our ghostly assailants by a heavy curtain of ice. During the brief summer it was really only a sort of dent in a low overhanging bluff, but in winter the hummocks piled up in front of it and completely blocked any possible entrance from the beach side except by using dynamite. There was another way in via the hollow of a great elm that had broken off at the base, leaving a huge stump whose withering roots helped to hold the ceiling of our cave together. No one knew of the hollow stump, of course, but Mac and myself.

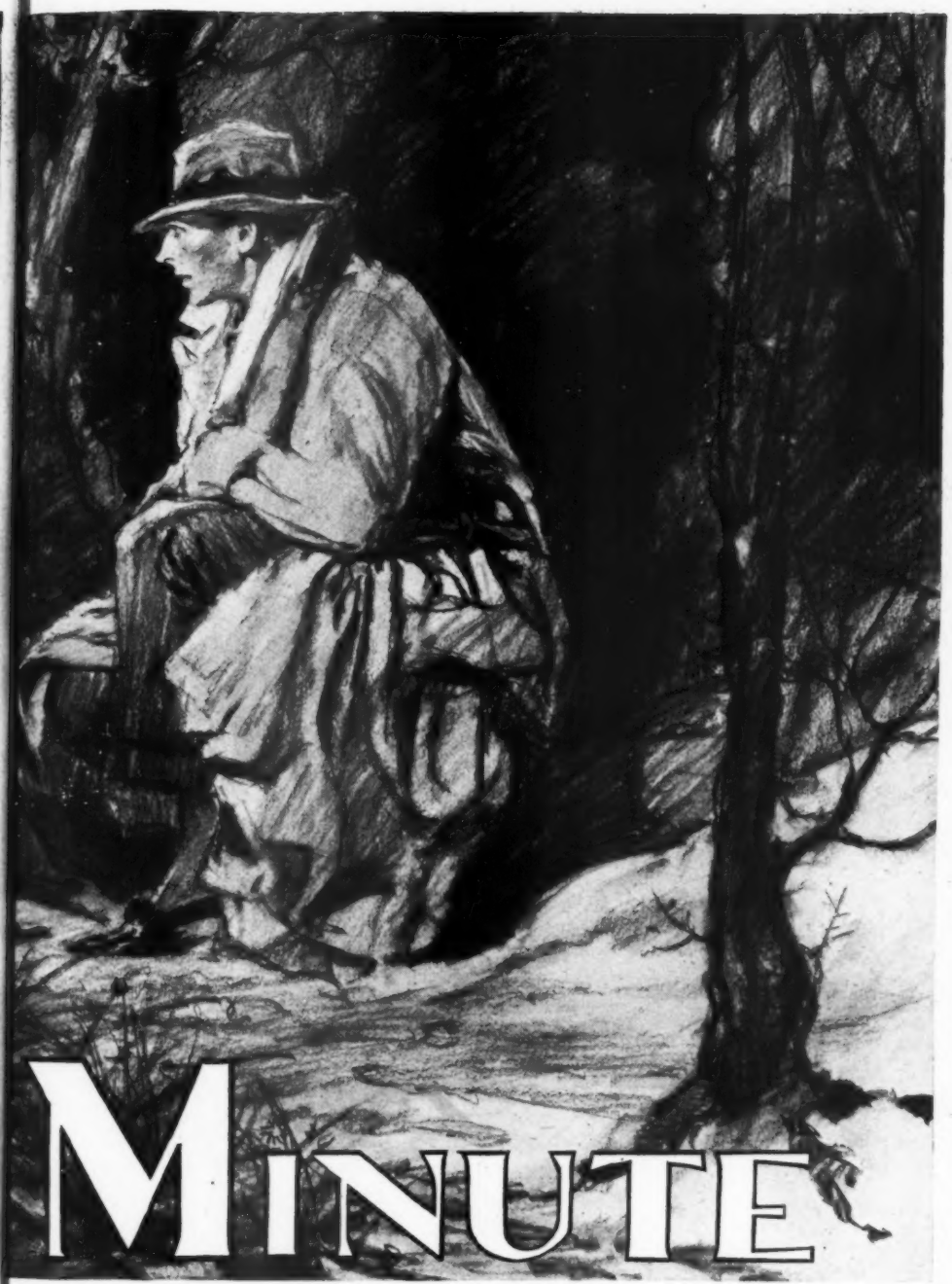
That is, until Martha Nielsen fell in one day when she was out gathering bittersweet for Christmas decorations. No one but a very active and rather small child could possibly have slipped down that passageway accidentally. You had to know just how to twist and turn in order to get in.

Mac and I found her the very day she got lost, or else there might have been a county-wide hue and cry over her disappearance—for she could never have gotten out by herself. She was down there playing contentedly with our wooden pistols and eating our stock of chocolate drops that we had hoarded away in case of a long siege.

Mac proposed that we kill her right then and there in order to keep her from telling of our secret hiding-place. I begged her off from that fate, and he compromised on the idea of cutting her tongue out so that she could not talk. I even objected to that, and we fought it out on the spot with bare fists. I lost the battle. In spite of the fact that I was trying to save her life, Martha seemed much more fascinated by Mac, and when I was beaten into submission and tied up in the corner with some clothes-line that we kept for that very purpose in case we took any prisoners, she paid no further attention to me, but attached herself to him like a well-trained dog. This, I afterward learned, is an atavistic characteristic of women, no matter how emancipated they become.

Rendering Martha inarticulate by surgery proved to be practically impossible with no instrument sharper than a wooden sword, although Martha gave him all the help she could by sticking out her little pink tongue farther than any animal could except a lizard.

So finally Mac had to compromise by making Martha a sort of submember of the gang and swearing her to highly penalized secrecy. As I remember her status, penalties were to be her principal privileges—I cannot recall any advantages that were promised to her. But that did not matter to Martha. She was pleased to the marrow to be allowed to associate with us, especially Mac, on any terms whatsoever.



MINUTE

"He's wounded. I must go back."
"And let him torture you, I suppose?"

I will say this for her: She really kept the secret of the ice-cave. And no one else ever did find it. We spent many hours in its sanctuary, because it was as warm as toast in there even in midwinter. An oil lamp heated it perfectly and made no smoke, which would have been a dead give-away in that country of trained woodsmen.

As we grew older, I fell in love with Martha. And Martha fell in love with Mac. More properly speaking, she fell more in love with him, for I think she had been fascinated by him from the very first.

I think that even then I regarded her infatuation for Mac as a portent of unhappiness for her. Mac was too wild ever to make a satisfactory husband for anyone, especially not for a sweet, plus-feminine sort of a woman like Martha. But I had no way of stopping it. Offering myself as a substitute was not the remedy, so I did not even try it. She knew, though, that my heart was hers for the asking. And she tried to be very kind to me. That, of course, only made the situation more painful.

Mac, I suppose, loved her in his way. She was a tribute to his bow and spear, and that was flattering to his vanity. For Martha developed into the prettiest girl in town—the most beautiful in the world, if you ask me, but no one has as yet. She became one of those small but very compact, hardy women such as the Northern races sometimes turn out. I think that Martha had the endurance of a man—it's a certainty that she needed it often; but she had also a way of melting in her gentler moments that made her something just a little short of an angel.

At any rate they were married, and soon they moved to Chicago. It was the loneliness of the town after they were gone that made me go away too. Only I went farther, and landed in Los Angeles. It seemed a good place for me to make a home for my widowed mother.

I expected to go into the lumber business out in the redwood country, but I became—don't laugh—a writer of motion-picture plots. You may not think that motion pictures have plots, or that if they have, anyone could possibly write them. It is fashionable to take a shot at the inanity of modern photo-play technique, so you may as well have your fun. But the actual facts are that there is an awful lot of constructive work done on the story of a flicker drama, whether it is a squawker or an old-fashioned gum-shoe peep-show, before the director gets at it. His first job is to throw away everything that the constructionists have done, but there has to be something for him to throw away, doesn't there? Or else why pay him so much money per week for knowing more than anybody else? It is all fearfully complicated, but scenario- and continuity-writers will understand, even if the general public is a little hazy as to what I am driving at.

My first connection with motion pictures was an accidental one. They wanted some technical advice on a lumber-camp story at one of the studios. I happened to know just what they needed and was able to straighten their plot out for them and make it sound reasonable. From that I just naturally drifted into the job of constructionist or sledge-hammer plot-forger. (*Forger* is a particularly happy word in this connection.)

With four other forg,—I mean constructionists,—I sat all day long for weeks on end in a small office on a studio lot in Hollywood. They were all capable fellows,—we were not a coeducational institution in this case,—and knew the variations of the motion-picture plot—all three of them—as well as any other crew on Celluloid Boulevard.

There was George Chrome, really a director, who did plotting

on the side, a gentle, capable chap who brought his dog along to conferences although the latter was not on salary. Another was Ward Goettler, an actor by training, with red hair, a robust physique and a fund of reminiscent anecdote on every subject except the one we happened to be working on. A third member was Joe Rogers, a magazine fiction writer—a nice fellow, but he was fired later because he didn't know camera angles or motion-picture requirements and was constantly attempting something either novel or consistent. The remaining collaborator had been imported from the Mack Sennett lot and had uncontrollable ideas at first about bathing-girls, and custard and other soft pies. His name was Jay Barnett, and he became as conservative as any of us after a few weeks' association.

Working together, we turned out success after success. By that I mean that as soon as anybody else made a picture that was a success, we had our orders to get up a plot almost exactly like it. Thus when Parabone Pictures Corporation swept the country with "The Big Push," we followed suit with a war picture entitled "The Huge Shove." When Retrograde Films made the Russian revolutionary epic, "Olga's Boatman," we did a Cossack opera with whiskers a few months afterwards called, "Red but Not Dictated," or something like that.

Finally came the underworld picture. The F. O. B. outfit broke out with a blinger, "Silent Guns"—and I'm not kidding any more when I say "blinger." It was a real picture, and we weren't the only squad of hack-writers in Hollywood who got panned by our bosses for letting a story like that get away from us. And like all the others, I guess, we got our orders to get to work and make a picture as near like it as possible without using the same negative.

To attempt to write anything like "Silent Guns" is a large order. Reluctant though we were to concede the worth of an offering concocted in the studio of a rival company, we were, one and all, willing to admit that there was a picture which had everything—heart-interest, suspense, glamour, sex-appeal and that elusive story quality that makes an audience want to get up and cheer for the hero or heroine. Right here in the middle of this paragraph is concealed a nugget of information that many practitioners of the gentle art of working upon the sympathies of readers and audiences have not yet discovered even though they have been digging for it for years. It is the magic secret of creating a situation and a character that the audience or reader can "root" for without reservations. No one can enjoy a baseball or football game if his sympathies are lukewarm—if he doesn't care much who wins. The same is true in your plays and stories. The villain has got to be unmitigatedly detestable and the leading lady or the leading gentleman has to be as charming as you think you are yourself. The "realists" only sell editions of a thousand copies but the "romanticists" could pay off the German war debt without getting an "N. S. F." valentine from their bankers.

There we were, in our little office, solemnly arrayed behind five small desks, each equipped with a typewriter, paper and a synopsis of "Silent Guns." We'd talk awhile and write awhile or pretend to, and then we'd talk some more or just sit quietly in an attitude of intense thought. The latter did not mean much, because you can almost sleep in that attitude, as many of my fellow-craftsmen will admit—not publicly, of course, but in the privacy of their own telephone-booths. When we were talking, George Chrome would take down nearly everything that was said on his portable typewriter, which he could operate at a very high speed. This was in case some priceless jewel of ratiocination might be uttered and forgotten in the heat of argument.

Finally we hammered together what we thought was a pretty fair story, and we sent it to our supervisor's office. A supervisor, if you don't happen to know it, is one of the reasons why pictures are what they are today. He is the first one to take a crack at a story.

He came back at us the next morning for a conference.

"Boys," he said impressively, "what we got to have in this picture is some suspense. In 'Silent Guns' you know how the gal is waiting at the top of the stairs to croak the heavy, and the lead is on his way to rescue her. Both men are making for the staircase, and nobody knows which one will get there first. But it's the hero, and he goes up; and she, thinking all the time it's the heavy, plugs him, and then the heavy comes and gets her, and the hero lays for him on the way down. Well, I looked—but there aint nothing like that in here. All you got to do is have the hero



upstairs and the gal coming up with the heavy after her. The hero shoots,—only I guess he better miss; that'll be more of a novelty. And—well, you boys can finish it up from there. That's what you get paid for."

He tore the manuscript across to show what he thought of our idea and left us to struggle for another week or so with the magnificent child of his own brain while he went over to have a conference with a beauty-contest winner.

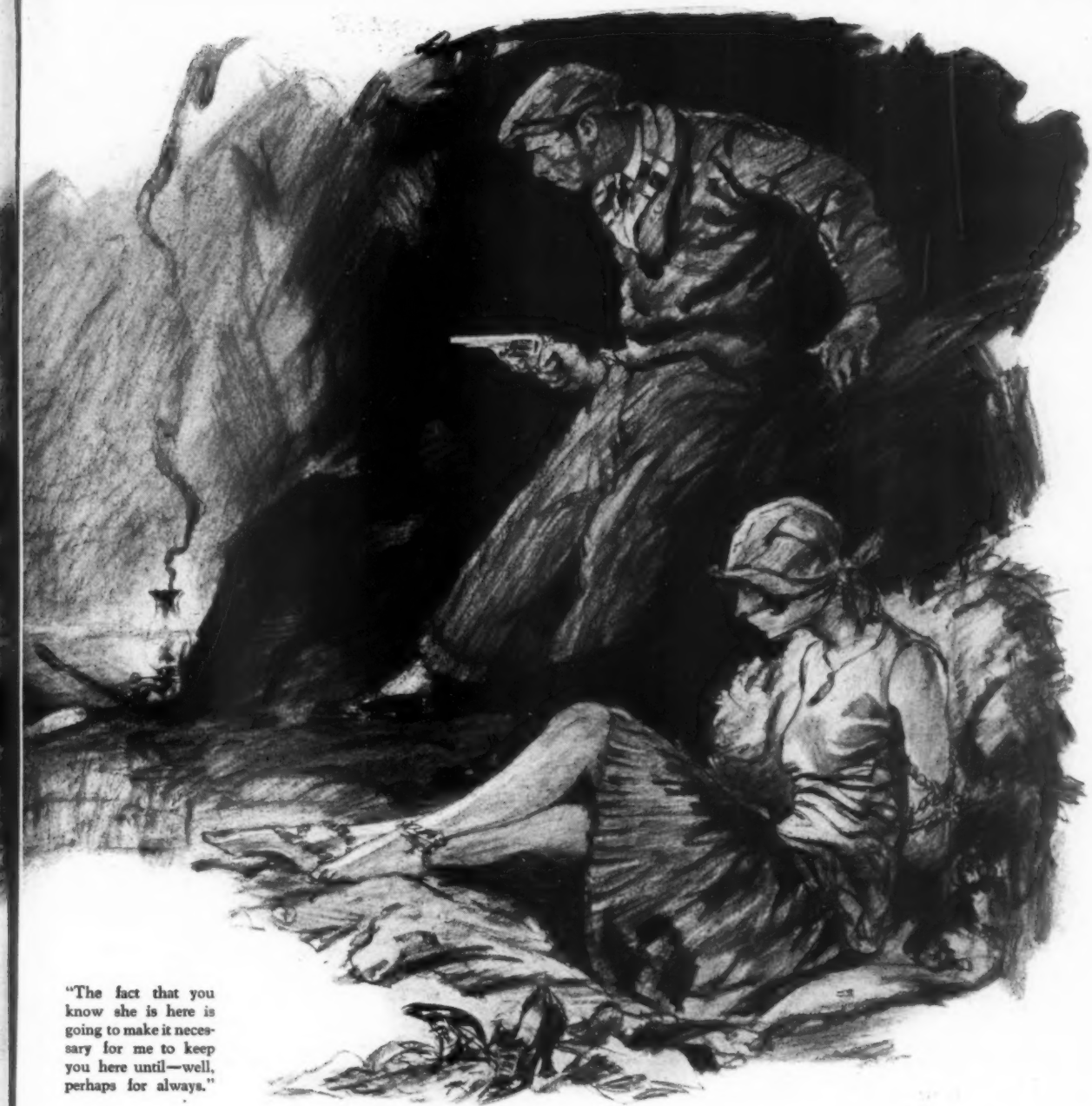
"The same to you!" said Goettler to our beloved supervisor as the door closed behind him.

"If I'd had a pail of soft paste," wailed Barnett, "I could have fitted it over his head for a hat without getting a drop of it on the floor."

"The comedy is out, beginning now," warned George Chrome, who was actually a sort of foreman over us. "Unless we want to go hunting for five separate and distinct new jobs, we'd better have an immediate attack of acute thought."

We did exactly that. Getting mad apparently had a good effect on us. The story that we turned out in the next six days was pretty fair. Everybody liked it, including even the supervisor. The last part of the plot, though, had a lame spot in it. We knew that ourselves. It was too easy to guess the finish. Five hundred feet, or about seven minutes, before the clinch, you could see what was coming and guess who was going to get the ride in the undertaker's taxi.

"We've got to begin shooting this one, though," our supervisor announced. "The exhibs are clamoring for 'blood operas,' and they've already got a couple under way on the Retro lot. We'll have to get started, and meanwhile you boys have another try at the finish. Put some suspense in it. Maybe you can think up a



"The fact that you know she is here is going to make it necessary for me to keep you here until—well, perhaps for always."

new twist on the governor's pardon arriving just as they turn on the juice in the *chaise-longue.*"

That would have been a swell idea if it had had anything whatever to do with the plot we were using.

So the cast was assembled, the director changed the title of the story for the first time and they began to build a couple of sets on sound-proof Stages Two and Five. Did I say that some of this masterpiece was going to have in it dialogue and strange cries uttered by the property-man?

But we constructionists went back to our padded cell to perspire over the plot. When I say perspire, I actually mean perspire, because it had turned out to be a very warm, muggy January; and Los Angeles, after the rainy season, does heat up a bit, especially in the middle of the day.

We began the day's work by reading the morning papers.

That's where I finished my day's work too.

The story that stopped me was not on the front page, but it was pretty well played up for just a shooting affray with the Chicago date-line on it. That was because the man who stopped the bullet was a policeman. It seems it was the closed season for cops in Chicago.

The man who was supposed to have done it was "Dead-pan" MacRae, who had mysteriously disappeared immediately afterward. He had apparently returned to his flat on the South Side where he lived with a woman named Mrs. Henning, because there was blood on some discarded clothing. Evidently MacRae had been hit too. Mrs. Henning disclaimed any knowledge of his whereabouts, however, and expressed a hope that they would catch him, as he had been two-timing her lately with a woman who lived in another part of town. She had had him followed and knew the address. Detectives went there and found that this woman too had disappeared. Neighbors in the same building testified that there had been some kind of struggle in the apartment, and that the woman had gone away unwillingly with a man who claimed to be her husband. The latter had emphasized the fact that he did not want any interference by showing a gun.

Her name was Martha Nielsen!

That, of course, was why I did no further work that day on our piffling little make-believe drama. I could not go on with the counterfeit presentment of the woes of a gangster and his girl, when the woman whom I still loved with all the heart of me was in real distress.

Of course I had no idea what had really happened, or why Mac had taken Martha with him when he *(Please turn to page 150)*

The Story of a Pekinese by Roland Pertwee



MING

Illustrated by William Meade Prince

TO swell a cup of happiness already brimming—a cup which bade fair to contain an inexhaustible source—came Ming.

Ming arrived in two forms: inanimate and animate.

Ming, the inanimate, was a porcelain dog of conventional and ferocious design, embellished with copper-green overglaze and patches of burnt-yellow antimony.

Ming, the animate, was a Pekinese pup with a fubsy coat the color of charred cedar wood, and nose and mouth and eyes which were more or less obscured in a patch of sooty black not much bigger than half a truffle.

The rival gifts were accompanied by a note addressed to Hugh and Nell on the day of their return from their honeymoon. The note said:

"The one is centuries old. The other although young has in him the wisdom, the knowledge and the pride of centuries. Choose which you will."

A messenger waited in the hall below to carry away the rejected gift.

It was a hard choice to make, for Hugh collected Chinese porcelain; and Nell, who had a feeling for all that was right and old and beautiful, knew at once that here was a piece exceeding in excellence anything else in the china cupboard. The inanimate Ming was a thing of beauty which, with reasonable care, would afford delight for the whole of their married lives—and after; whereas the most you could say of Ming the animate was that although you fell in love with him at first sight and desired to roll him on his back, and pinch his round hairless tum, and feel his pin-sharp milk-teeth gnawing courageously at your knuckles, and hear his ferocious growls that sounded like the rattle of a kettle-lid when the water is boiling, he was after all only a very small dog who would presently pass away, leaving nothing more to be remembered by than a few snapshots and a ten-inch headstone at the garden end.

Of course he was royal born; but neither Hugh nor Nell were snobs, and the thought of including a princeling in their household weighed with them lightly.

And again, at that moment of their lives love was too plentiful to put them in need of fresh objects upon which to lavish it.

So the chances of the choice falling upon Ming the animate were remote. Ming the inanimate, in wrappings of cotton-wool, was removed from a box of Chinese lacquer, undressed with reverent hands and put in splendid isolation upon a console table; while Ming the animate, released from a common hamper, bounced, after the fashion of a rubber ball, below the said table, uttering gruesome threats to his rival with pathetically inadequate vocal chords.

"I believe he knows," said Nell. And Hugh echoed: "I do believe the little beggar *does* know."

Conscious of having captured their attention, Ming the animate followed the advantage by seizing the lace of Hugh's shoe and bracing his small bowed legs against the pile of the carpet, pulled viciously and distractingly.

"He *is* rather a precious," Nell suggested.

"Yes, I know—I know, but—" And Hugh launched into a panegyric upon overglazes and the kilns of King-te-chen.

In fact, he showed off, rather.

Nell did not reproach him for showing off. Their marriage, of six weeks' duration, had not yet brought them within reach of reproaches. It was occupied solely in admirations and satisfactions. Perhaps they were being overtactful with each other—which is understandable, for it was not a boy and girl match. He had been married before and had formed views and habits. And she, by a single season, had bade farewell to the twenties in all but looks.

So you see they were grown up enough to be watchfully kind and indulgent and appreciative.

"One could never hope to *buy* a piece like that," said Hugh.

Nell agreed, but her eyes wandered wistfully toward Ming the animate, who was attempting once and for all to decide whether he or the plump cushion before the fireplace was the better fellow. The fight up to the present had gone by weight, but the gold tassel with which the cushion was adorned already gave signs of disintegration. A final steady pull decided the issue. Like line from a fishing-reel, strands of fine gold wire flowed out with an admirable suggestion of weakness and exhaustion.

"*Garr-r,*" said Ming, and fumbled the strands from his mouth with a wayward back leg—whereat, not having much skill in balance, he rolled over dizzily.

There is no gainsaying that Ming's legs did not yet fulfill their natural functions with reliability. They were so very bowed in front and so very knock-kneed at the back. They were absurd, they were soft, they were crumply legs. They folded up unexpectedly; they got in each others' way, and they were barely long enough to keep his tummy off the ground. Also they were improperly clad. He had arrived, in fact, without his trousers. In that matter his tail was also improperly clad, for although one might be sure that presently it would become as a chrysanthemum in full bloom, it was then innocent of covering.

So carried away was Hugh with his eloquent discourse on ceramics that he had quite forgotten Ming the animate, and was unaware of the havoc he had caused. This disinterestedness Ming was quick to perceive and resent. It excited from him a protesting growl.

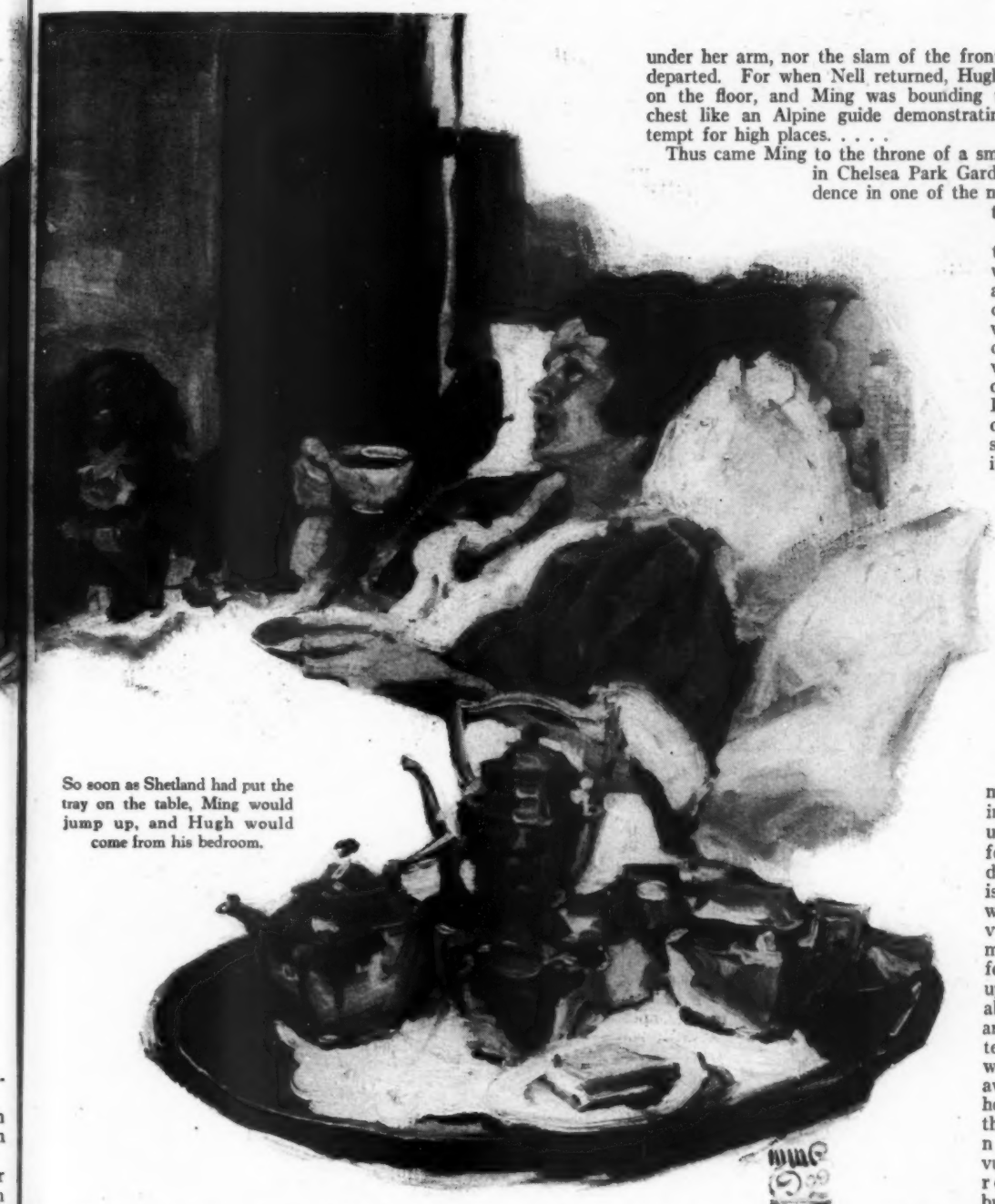
And Hugh, breaking off and pointing with an accusing finger, exclaimed:

"I say—look!"

Any shame this outcry may have inspired in Ming was—let us face it—swallowed up in victory, though he retreated beneath a Queen Anne elbow chair.

"He'll have to be punished," said Hugh inexorably.

Nell supposed so.



So soon as Shetland had put the tray on the table, Ming would jump up, and Hugh would come from his bedroom.

"Of course he must be punished," Hugh insisted.

"Yes," she said; "but one can't punish a dog unless he's one's own dog, Hugh. It would be almost like slapping some one else's child."

Now, here was a truth that could not be assailed, but the desire to punish ran strong.

"Come here, sir," said Hugh.

Ming came, not obediently, but of his own free will. Perhaps he liked to be addressed as sir, but in no case would he have groveled. It is not the fashion of ruling classes to grovel. They take their punishment tail up, and depart tail up from the place of punishment. Later, in some ensured solitude, sorrow and lamenting may ensue. But not in public.

Hugh gathered up what there was of Ming, and Ming's forelegs were trapped between the extended fingers of his left hand.

"You're a bad boy," said Hugh, and *whack* came his right hand on what there was of Ming's flank.

And Nell said, "Darling!" kissed the top of Hugh's head, and taking Ming the inanimate from the console table, wrapped it up in cotton-wool and restored it to the lacquer box

Hugh did not hear her steal from the room with the box under her arm, nor the slam of the front door as the messenger departed. For when Nell returned, Hugh was lying on his back on the floor, and Ming was bounding up and down upon his chest like an Alpine guide demonstrating his agility and contempt for high places. . . . .

Thus came Ming to the throne of a small but elegant kingdom in Chelsea Park Gardens and a summer residence in one of the most enchanting parts of the County of Sussex.

Hugh and Nell and the entire domestic staff were his subjects, and although now and then one or another of them would make a pretence of authority, his rule was never materially questioned. Since all Pekinese spring from one noble family, it will sometimes happen that individual members suffer from inbreeding and a consequent nervousness and irritability. Such was not so with Ming. He was pure-bred but not inbred. He was the product of parallel rather than branch lines. This being so, he was gifted with a pellucid intellect, unfailing good spirits, charming manners, a mettlesome but never an irritable temper, and an utter disregard for all forms of danger. He did not admit the existence of fear. Nature, which had equipped him very modestly in the matter of physical defenses, had bestowed upon him conversational abilities of a surprising and alarming order. Dogs ten times his size and weight fled before the awful accusations that he leveled at them. Yet these accusations were never of a loud and vulgar kind. He did not roar at his attackers, but ignored them, turning his back on their threatened assaults and muttering withering sarcasms calculated to put even the most redoubtable to flight. At the conclusion of these victories Ming metaphorically and actually washed his hands of the whole affair, and kicked all memory of it aside with his short back legs.

Much of his time was spent apparently in slumber, but the truth is he was engaged in Oriental meditation. Stretched flat upon his favorite armchair with his flat smudgy face buried between his round front paws, he pondered profoundly upon the mysteries of life. He thought about the two people he loved and the several he liked and the multitude he despised. He thought of ways of showing affection and contempt. He thought how soft voices were pleasing and all loud sounds abhorrent. He thought how good were habits, and cream, and little runs out with kindly attendants, and games with the towel after a bath, and the soft sulphur-colored silk eiderdown on Nell's bed on which his first important lie-down of each day took place. He thought of the sofa corner in Hugh's study where every morning, from ten to one-thirty, he and Hugh were occupied in literature and reflection. He thought what capital things panoramas were—his idea of a panorama being a motorcar in which

one stood up and looked through a window and watched houses and churches and pavements and millions of people unwind into fields and hills and forests and hardly any people at all but very jolly smells. He thought how exciting—and sometimes desperately disappointing—suitcases were. Above all, he meditated upon the incalculable virtues of loyalty and a sense of atmosphere.

His owners' possession of a country house as well as of a town house had at first caused him some confusion. The departure from town to country had plunged him into atmospheric differences very hard to adjust. He perceived, with dismay, that Nell and Hugh entirely altered their habits of living from the moment of leaving Chelsea Park Gardens. They rose earlier and hardly ever changed their clothes. They had heartier but shorter meals. They spent far more time out doors than in. There was no study, no work done with a pen—and the front door was always open.

A condition of affairs more elemental than elegant was the vogue. His subjects rode on things that pull coal-carts, went for enormous walks under endless trees, let off sticks that roared, and slew brown parrots with no cages round them, and fluffy animals with a provoking smell that made him want to run faster than he could, and bite something that he was never likely to catch up. Also they would put on sewer boots, his subjects, and walk out into deep water flicking whips above their heads—long whippy whips—with blue-bottles fastened to their ends.

It was all most peculiar and most perplexing, particularly the whippy-whip business. The first time Ming accompanied them on one of their water-walking excursions, he nearly lost his life.

Nell and Hugh breasted their way out into the middle of a lake with the water up to their waists. They had left Ming on the bank with the luncheon-basket for company. But even the smell of his own little dinner, which was in the basket, was no comfort in such perilous circumstances. His two beloved subjects were in danger, and it behooved him to advise and if need be to rescue them.

Ming barked warningly, but the trout were rising and they paid no heed.

Ming barked some more, but still unavailingly. Then he ran right round the lake and barked from the other side. But the tall bulrushes smothered his cries, and the wind mocked them.

For the first time in his life Ming was afraid. But he was afraid as a gentleman need have no shame to be afraid. He was not afraid for himself. He feared as a king fears who sees his subjects in mortal danger.

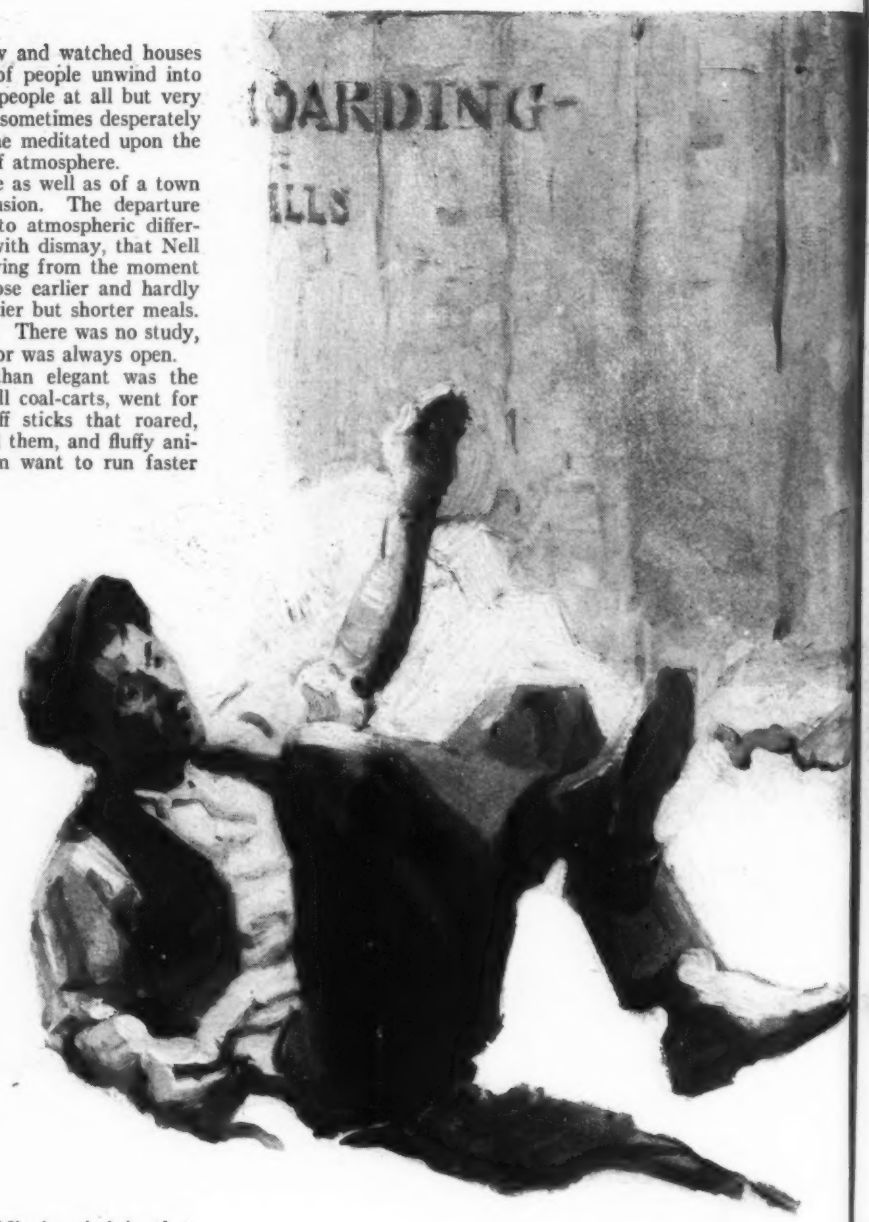
It is hard to say what passed through Ming's mind in that moment of doubt and agony, but it must have been a very selfless thought. Perhaps affection and imagination provided him with a body as great as his courage, and he saw himself with his two loved ones a-straddle upon his back being brought safely to the shore. On the other hand, he may have conceived that the time was ripe to die in good company. Until that moment he had never swum a yard; but this fact notwithstanding, Ming launched his little lifeboat regardless of personal safety. Beyond the bulrushes was a clear pool, and across it he paddled valiantly toward a smooth green island beyond. His head was so low in the water that he could no longer see his subjects, but a breeze warned him of their whereabouts.

He reached the island very soon, only to learn that it was no island but a great bed of weed that clung to his legs and embraced his body and tried, with multiple tentacles, to drag him down. Ming struggled on, but fight as he would, he made no headway. The anchored weed was pulling him lower and lower beneath the surface. Already his mouth was under, and only the two small holes in his retroussé nose stood between him and his forefathers in eternity.

"Hullo," called Hugh, fifty yards away. "Hullo. Look, Nell, an otter."

But a woman looks with more than her eyes. She looks with her heart—her instinct and her imagination.

"Ming!" she gasped. "It's Ming!"



"I believe it's not etiquette," he said, "to make remarks about previous ownership, but I see nothing to stop me doing this." And he crashed his fist into Birdface's jaw.

And then Hugh cast away his rod and his creel and swam and floundered through the weed and was no more than just in time.

On the bank when all was well, if rather wet, Nell cried. It was not because of the danger she cried, but because of the bravery—which is the most cry-worthy cause in the world.

"You see, he meant to save us," she sniffed.

And Ming, who looked for all the world like a skinned rabbit, sat up on his haunches and said:

"M-er-er-er!"

Which translated means: "What about a speck of mutton?"

In consequence of this and other rural experiences Ming determined to assume two distinct personalities—one for town and the other for country. In town he displayed a sober and remote personality, at once elegant and preoccupied. Except to welcome his subjects on their return after absences, his voice was never lifted. He ignored tradesmen, passers-by and persons who rang the front door-bell. He did not even growl disapproval at the sounds of dog fights in the neighborhood. He sat in the same



places at the same times of day and observed an unvarying routine in both conduct and habit.

But in the country Ming was a different being. He was brusque, challenging and audacious. With his back legs he threw bits of gravel at butchers' boys. He insulted cows and behaved in an overbearing manner to sheep. He dug holes in the garden and growled down them at the mythical enemies they were presumed to harbor. He made tours of inspection and pretended to understand guns. He formed an entente with a She Collie whose curiosity took her from home. In this doubtful company he was concerned in no less than four free fights. The She Collie admired him above rubies, and on one or two occasions when they fell in with a stranger she passed him off as her husband. He accompanied Hugh and Nell wheresoever fancy took them. In this he revealed the strictest impartiality and never betrayed favoritism for one over the other. In his mind they existed as a single being, and if, to foster this conviction, a certain amount of ubiquity was called for, it didn't matter.

And so for five very right and proper years his kingdom was at peace and all was well. It is hard to lay the blame on any particular system or individual for robbing that kingdom of the comforting voice which by day and night had uttered the reassuring words "All's well." But the fact remains that by this and that —this small change and that small omission—the spirit of "All's well" lapsed into a doubtful condition of well-being.

At first it was hardly noticeable, being more a matter of inflection than anything else. After five years of married life all sorts of subtle transformations are apt to occur. The trouble may spring from lack of taking notice or unreadiness to take care.

At the beginning there was so much care and such unceasing notice. Getting used to each other, and normality and a certain amount of oblivion to mutual interests are the familiar halting-places on the matrimonial highroad. And at each of these halting-places some little jolly and intimate thing gets left behind, and nobody bothers to go back and fetch it. And as the load gets lighter, it is small wonder if he or she fills in the empty spaces with a different stock.

In recent years Hugh's work had progressed very successfully. He had earned for himself a great deal of admiration; and this, very foolishly, he hoarded and gave little of it back.

Perhaps, on this account, and finding herself running short of much that had been both delightful and desirable, Nell too started to withhold. She withheld affection and offered in its stead the fruits of a sense of humor that had not been ripened by any domestic fireshine. Until this period their marriage had been mercifully immune from a sense of humor in its expressed forms. But now, in the absence of a kindlier alternative, it flourished exceedingly.

Nell's particular sense of humor was exclusively directed upon and against hitherto unrevealed evidence of comedy in Hugh's personality. Scarcely a day passed in which it did not illumine some fresh and absurd characteristic.

Now, it cannot be gainsaid that there was in Hugh, as there is in all men, much that was ridiculous. That, in common with others of his sex, he was unprepared to believe this was so, provided no doubt the most supremely funny thing about him. Hugh was prepared to admit that he had foibles, but he felt they should be respected. Nell, on the other hand, was sure that they ought to be laughed at.

The results of this divergent comedy sense are too easily imagined to call for more than the sketchiest *(Please turn to page 118)*

IN TUNE WITH

FRANCINE LARRIMORE

plays in a comedy that is well entitled "Let Us Be Gay." Rachel Crothers, who wrote "Old Lady 31" and "Nice People," is the author; and John Golden, who presented "Lightnin' " and "Turn to the Right" and "The First Year," presents this play — whatever it is, exactly, that "presents" implies.

Probably it is something selective and having to do with the risks involved. However, these are absent from this production, for "Let Us Be Gay" is one of the comedies which it is imperative — and therefore practically impossible — for everyone to see. And with all regard for the writing of Miss Crothers and the presenting of Mr. Golden, we suspect that the playing of Miss Larrimore —do you remember her in "Chicago"?—is the most important reason for the triumph of this play. A recent and characteristic photograph is reproduced at the right.



Photo by Lewis-Smith

DWIGHT F. DAVIS

As the great Tilden slowly retreats further and further from the tennis throne, and as Bobby Jones—with still no signs of slipping, to be sure—yet adds another year to his age, you wonder what may yet be in store for champions.

A Tilden of a generation ago is the Honorable Dwight F. Davis, whose picture appears below, best known to the youngsters of these recent years as the donor of the international tennis trophy, the Davis Cup. To be sure, he was Secretary of War under President Coolidge; but everyone knows that Coolidge had no war.

Mr. Davis, however, had won the right to this appointment on the field of honor, for he is one of the few wearers of the D. S. C., which was awarded "for extraordinary heroism" in the battles of September 29-30th, 1917.

President Hoover appointed him Governor-General of the Philippines.



CHRISTOPHER MORLEY

who wrote those delightfu novelties, "The Haunted Bookshop," "Where the Blue Begins" and "Thunder on the Left," has been demonstrating the pleasure and profit that are to be found, in our times, from some of the oldest American tunes and words.

Mr. Morley—whose picture appears at the left — was chiefly responsible for the reopening of the old Rialto Theater in Hoboken (across ferry from New York) and for the production there of the dashing old melodrama "After Dark," of date 1868. So enormously successful was this daring venture that Mr. Morley and his associates took on the old Lyric, also in Hoboken; and therein they have been showing with equal triumph the very first of all American musical comedies, "The Black Crook."



Photo © by Underwood & Underwood

OUR TIMES

LAURA LA PLANTE

has the luck to appear (and also to be heard) on the screen in the most popular rôle of recent years—that of *Magnolia* in "Show Boat."

After a run of two years in New York, the "Show Boat" company has journeyed no farther than Boston, where crowded houses are still encoring "Old Man River," at this writing; so it is a good thing for the rest of the country, in these impatient times, that the film-sound production of Edna Ferber's classic is showing.

The popularity of this musical play — which was staged by Ziegfeld from the book by Miss Ferber, which was originally written partly at Mr. Ziegfeld's suggestion—is so great that the stage company will visit other cities, although the film of the play already has been shown.

Miss La Plante—whose photograph is reproduced at the right—previously has appeared in "The Midnight Sun" and "The Cat and the Canary."



Photo by Universal

DOROTHY SANDS

Radcliffe, which is the women's department of Harvard University, usually is associated in the popular mind with the most austere and forbidding of feminine activities—study and "research." By the time Dorothy Sands entered the college, playwriting and even acting had become part of the curriculum; for Professor Baker's famous school of the drama—the "47 workshop"—was at Harvard; and Radcliffe girls not only could write but also take part in the practical production and acting of the plays.

She played her first leads, therefore, in his productions, and then joined the company at the Neighborhood Playhouse, appearing with the Grand Street Follies, in "The Dybbuk" and in "The Lion Tamer."

From Radcliffe to the Follies seems a step to surprise the founders of that New England college. Miss Sands was, also, *Irina Arkadin* in the "Sea-gull."

Her picture appears below.

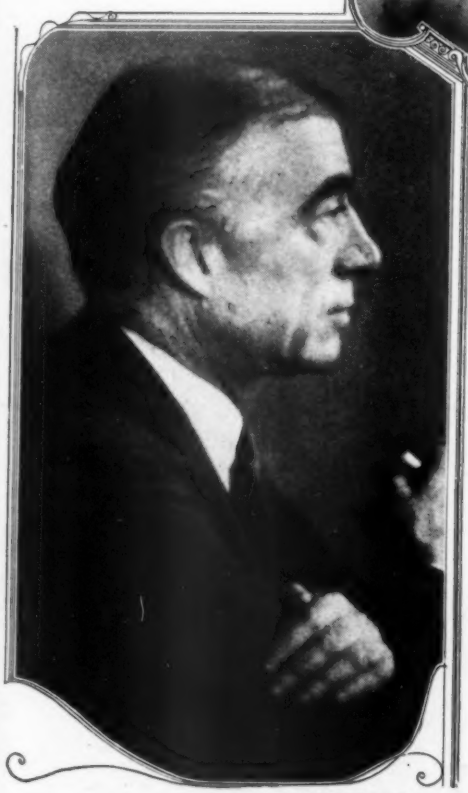


Photo by Doris Ulmann

JESSE LYNCH WILLIAMS

Some thirty years ago appeared a collection of college stories so superior to the usual romanticized tales of "college life" that the youth of that day hailed the new book with cheers. Here was represented the things they actually said and thought and did.

This book was "Princeton Stories," by Jesse Lynch Williams, who had recently been graduated, and who, while making a name for himself in the world, continued to keep in touch with new developments, and the new classes, in the colleges. Upon another page of this issue we print Mr. Williams' report of his recent revisits to Princeton and other universities, under the title, "Today's Youth."

Mr. Williams' latest novel is that very clever "They Still Fall in Love." His picture appears at the left.



Photo by Mishkin

Happiness and Handwriting

By Claire Carvalho and Boyden Sparkes



DAVID N. CARVALHO AND HIS GRANDSON

The great expert on handwriting was the late David N. Carvalho, who was called, in cases of the highest importance, to give deciding testimony. His daughter now reveals how he personally felt and acted when obliged, professionally, to take sides in a critical case; and she tells the story of some of the trials when not life nor fortune but honor and happiness hung upon handwriting.

ONE time my father came home with a satchel stuffed with waste paper, some of it in scraps so tiny that when he sifted it through his fingers, it fluttered to the surface of his desk like snowflakes. I noticed that a certain order obtained in this litter. It was assorted into big fiber envelopes each of which could be identified by a distinctive white label on which was written a date. There were about thirty of these containers; and the dates, in sequence, represented a month of time.

"What stuff is this?" I asked him, my housekeeping instinct aroused defensively. "What are you going to do with it?"

"A magician's trick," he said. "Instead of being content with extracting a rabbit from a hat, I am going to attempt to do something much more spectacular. These scraps of paper will enable me to conduct a test of a woman's fidelity. If you watch me closely"—he proceeded to pull his coat-sleeves back from his wrists playfully—"you may see me pull a divorce out of a wastebasket."

I not only watched; I helped him. We worked many hours a day for several days, reconstructing the written souvenirs of a month of a woman's life. The crumpled sheets of paper which merely had to be smoothed were of little interest to him; but the ones that had been torn into very small pieces held his attention.

"She tore these because she did not want them to be read by other eyes than hers," he said. Then, slowly, with the utmost patience, he would arrange the pieces on a sheet of transparent tracing-paper. When this mosaic was complete, he would fix each tiny scrap in place with mucilage.

"The husband," he explained as we worked, "is several times a millionaire. The wife is extravagant, selfish and socially indiscreet."

"I don't care," I protested, "I think the husband is a mean wretch to spy upon his wife in this manner. I'm surprised that you accept this type of case."

That made him furious. He pushed the papers away from him and jumped up from his chair.

"Would you criticize the judge that sat in a divorce case? Would you criticize the attorney who defended a client who was being sued for divorce? Of course you would not. Suppose this rich man went into court and made charges against his wife which he could not sustain. Then I grant you he *would* be a wretch. Here we are dealing with a husband who feels that his wife has given him grounds for at least the right to be suspicious. Instead of balancing the situation by growing sulky or himself being unfaithful to her, he employs a ready means of confirming, or abolishing, his suspicions.

"As for my part in this matter, I can no more refuse to accept this kind of work than a physician may refuse to treat a patient with a loathsome disease. Personally, it seems to me that this is a kinder way to obtain evidence for a divorce than is ordinarily employed. Do you think she would prefer to be followed by detectives until she was trapped in a humiliating situation?"

When we had completed the reconstruction of the torn letters, it developed that none bore signatures; but the husband had provided Father with samples of the writing of the man with whom he suspected his wife was engaged in an intrigue. It was apparent even to me that the hand which had written the specimens had also written the passionately phrased letters that we had pieced together.

Sometime afterward the husband sued for a divorce. Father testified, and the marriage was dissolved. I felt uncomfortable about the affair—and said so.



CLAIRE CARVALHO

"I feel as you do," he confessed, to my surprise, "but not for the same reason. In this instance the husband induced one of his household servants to collect the contents of his wife's boudoir wastebasket for a month. You read her lover's messages. No doubt you are wondering if there was not some great justification for her actions. There may have been, but in that case she should have left her husband. You see how your judgment is being swayed by your emotions. Perhaps this will help you to understand why I always prefer to know only the question on which my opinion is sought.

"I regard myself as a mere instrument to ascertain the truth. Most lawyers who have engaged my services understand this predilection of mine, and so present their cases that I can work impersonally. It happened this time that the client blurted out his troubles and then asked me point blank to discover if the writer of those partially destroyed letters was the man he suspected.

"I do not like divorce cases, but a soldier

cannot stay his hand when he sees that the enemy he is about to kill has a pleasant countenance; nor can I refuse to give an opinion merely because it is going to bring some weak person to a day of reckoning. I do not make the facts; I merely establish them."

My father in the course of his career testified in some of the most sensational divorce-suits. Sometimes his skill resulted in saving the good name of a woman who but for him might have lived to the end of her days with a tarnished reputation. Once, that I know of, he saved the good name of a man.

Near the end of his career he was retained in a suit in which the husband was a very rich man. The co-respondent was an adventurer who was willing to sell to the husband love-letters which he had received from the wife.

"Carvalho," said the husband's lawyers, "you go with our detectives to keep this rendezvous. You are now familiar with Mrs. X's handwriting, and you can make sure that the letters offered to us were in reality written by her. This fellow is not above offering us forged letters, we think. He is asking twenty-five thousand dollars for them. If we pay him the money and then discover that he has fooled us, we shall have no redress whatever. You go along—"

"No," said Father. "You get your letters. Then if you will bring them to me, I will undertake to say whether they were written by Mrs. X, but I'll not have anything to do with collecting the evidence."

So, when he was brought in contact, professionally, with a breach of the marital code, he was inclined to be as remorseless in his private judgment as a Turk. If the man was the guilty one, he was just as pronounced in his feelings. I remember it was so in the case of a New York couple who were fairly prominent in fashionable society.

I learned that Father had been retained when he brought home a sheaf of love-letters, passionately phrased writings that had been sent by the husband to his wife during summer separations when she had gone to Maine with the children while he remained behind in New York. "Forget I am your husband," was a plea in one of these letters. "The very word *husband* sounds cold and austere. Just think of me as your adoring lover."

"Why," I said as he read it aloud, "I think that is a peach of a letter."

"So it is," my father agreed. "So are all of these. There are letters to the man's children that I should have been proud to write. They are beautifully sincere. They should be treasures in the wife's sight, but now they have become standards of comparison for me."

"What happened?" I asked.

"The man," he said, "has been a fashionable photographer with whom sittings were arranged almost as if he were a portrait painter. If you were to read all of the letters, you would discover that he is a man who craves to be in that state which we call 'in love,' while the wife was rather more content to be a safely married woman. During her long absence through the summer months, she might have held him by writing letters as fervid as these. I think with an adequate response to his letters, he could have been held as if in fetters of steel; but instead of such letters he received reports on the state of the children's health, the family finances, bits of gossip and a few conventional words of affection.

"It would be grossly unjust to say that the philandering of this man was merely the gratification of a physical appetite. His letters are poignant expressions of his hunger for love, fine love. Unhappily the wife did not sense this, and the poor fool of a man started roving after women as foolish as himself. His very practical wife decided that if he was neglecting her, he must be singing his song in another ear, and so she retained a private detective. The detective, while the wife was out of town, followed the husband from his club to a rendezvous where he met a woman. Then he trailed them to a hotel. His instructions, however, did not permit him to raid the pair. The result is that I was retained to clinch the case.

"What I have here is a photograph of a page of that hotel register, on which this man has written *'John Blank and wife.'* The little word *'and'* will prove to be his undoing, because, while he did attempt to disguise his handwriting, when he registered, that single word *'and'* was scribbled in his normal manner.

"It is ironic that I shall be able to convince the court that this is in fact his handwriting, by comparing an enlargement of it with that word as it appears fifteen times in some verses he wrote as a letter to one of his children."

"It seems a shame," I said.

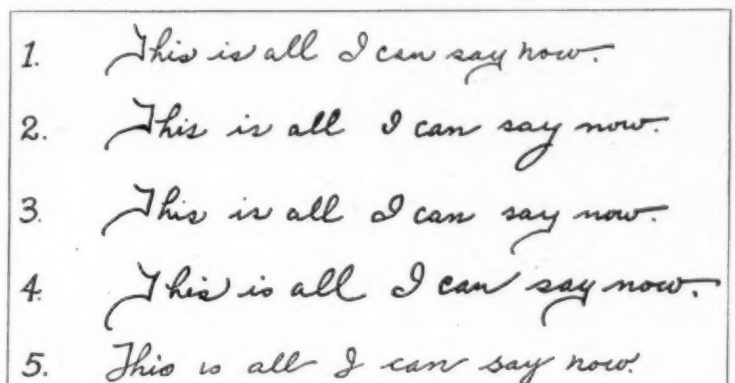
"It is a shame," he agreed. "It is a shame that a man's selfishness can react so terribly on those he loves."

The case was heard before a referee who decided that because the erring husband had written *"and"* in his normal manner this was as damning as a thumb-print. The wife got her divorce.

I questioned my father about his testimony in that case.

"How could you be so sure?" I asked. "After all, there was just one word. It would seem to me to be flimsy evidence."

"To me the case was a very plain one," he replied, "but that would not have had much weight if I had not been able to make it plain to others, notably to the referee. Suppose I told you to begin a search for a man who was precisely six feet, one and one quarter inches tall, who had red hair, hazel eyes (the left one with a cast in it), a diamond-shaped scar on the calf of his right leg, whose right ear had been pierced by a bullet, and who had a female figure tattooed on his right breast. Suppose I told you, further, that his little toe had been amputated from his left foot, and that he had a harelip. You might have difficulty in finding such a man, but if you did find him, I think I could convince you that you had found the only human being who had all nine of those points of identity.



A girl wrote sentence Number One, in her ordinary hand and with the pen to which she was accustomed. Immediately she wrote the same sentence with another pen; and sometime later, under other conditions, she wrote the sentence again. A man used other specimens of her handwriting from which he traced or forged two copies of the same sentence. See if you can pick the lines written by the girl who wrote line Number One and the two forged copies of her handwriting. The answer to this test is printed at the end of this article.

"We all proceed to become more and more individualized every day that we live. Every meal that we eat, every word that we utter, every thought that passes through our minds, every word that is addressed to us, becomes as a little hammer-blow that shapes us differently from all of humanity that ever has lived or ever shall live. Deliberately I have marked this hypothetical individual in a fashion more pronounced than is the case with most individuals that the man-hunters of the earth usually have to find.

"Let us see how improbable it is that these nine separate points of identity should coincide in as many as two human individuals. The first thing to do would be to determine how seldom each of these points of identity will be found separately. In other words, how many red-haired men are there on the earth? Remember, there are on the face of the globe only slightly more than a billion human beings, counting men, women and children. Next we should want to determine, how many men have hazel eyes; then, how many have casts in their left eye, then how many have female figures tattooed on their right breast; and so on.

"Purposely, now, I shall select arbitrary fractions of such reasonableness that you will concede that I am not overstating the situation. Suppose we say that one man in every four is red-haired, that one man in every ten is precisely the same height as the man we are seeking, that one in every five has the same color eye, and then for the disfigurements suppose we assume that each of these is to be found once in every three hundred men who are examined. Actually these points would not occur so often. I doubt if more than one man in a thousand has a cast in his left eye.

"Each of our nine separate points is now represented by a fraction—one-fourth, one-tenth, one-fifth; and six fractions each with

the value of one three hundredth. Our problem is to determine how frequently all of these peculiarities combined in one individual could be expected to occur in another individual. Professor Simon Newcomb, an accomplished mathematician and astronomer, has given us a formula with which we may determine how often coincidence of all the features may be expected. This formula may be stated so: 'The probability of concurrence of all the events is equal to the continued product of the probabilities of all the separate events.' The continued product of our fractions gives us one chance in 145,800,000,000,000,000—that is, one hundred and forty-five quadrillions, eight hundred trillions. Such a vast sum transcends anything in human experience. If you say that there is still a chance that the thing might happen, that in spite of the mathematical formula two men might be discovered in whom are combined all of these distinctive features, I might agree. You would say, 'a chance.' I would say, 'a fat chance.'"

"Yes," I said, "but we were talking about that one little word on the hotel register, that treacherous conjunction by means of which a philandering husband was forced to pay alimony. How could you find in that tiny scrap of writing sufficient distinctive points of identity to make a formidable calculation, like this other one?"

"Well," he said, "there was the matter of slope or angle for one; there was the matter of pen-pressure, or width of line, for another; the matter of size, of the system of writing; the downward strokes and the upward strokes. Each one of these and some other points were for me as marked as red hair, hazel eyes, scars, missing toes and other characteristics would be for you. It was the combination of particulars that persuaded me. It becomes, in the end, a matter of common sense."

I RECALL one of my father's cases in which the problem of identity of certain handwriting was involved with the questioned paternity of a little boy. It was a problem strangely tangled with handwriting. It was almost as if the lawyers believed that they could determine whose blood-streams were mingled in the blue veins of that child by discovering whether, or no, his mother had written a certain package of love-letters which were labeled as exhibits. If the woman did write the letters, then there was no escape from the conclusion that a man other than her husband was the father of this child.

My father had been retained by the husband's lawyers. Among his papers after his death I found a copy of the report that he had made to them before the case went to trial. There were seven typewritten pages in which he had listed many of the duplicating characteristics which had fixed in his mind the opinion that the accused wife had written the letters. In concluding that report he wrote: "I might go on and fill many more pages with the comparisons of letters, words and figures which I have made as between the known writing and the questioned writing, but I think your attention has been addressed to a sufficiency for the present, certainly enough to call attention to the fact that the opinion I have rendered stands on a very firm and substantial foundation." And I thought of something my father had told me concerning the mother on the day she testified.

"A little box of pen-points and an assortment of holders were offered to her," he said. "She was to write under the eyes of those in the courtroom specimens of handwriting to be compared with the love-letters. I think I never saw a woman who behaved more admirably in such circumstances. She knew full well the import of the test, but she met it with a gracious smile that betrayed none of the anxiety that was in her heart.

"'I like a stub pen,' she said, much as if she had been expressing a preference for cream or lemon in her tea. She picked the points over. When she found one to her liking, she fitted it into the holder she had selected. Then, smilingly, she asked for a match. With this she burned the lacquer coat off the metal point so that the ink would flow evenly. When she had done this, she looked up, clear-eyed and smiling, for directions as to what to write. The feminine aristocrats who mounted the platform of the guillotine during the French revolution and asked the headsman what was then required of them showed no more courage, I think. You must remember this woman knew that she had written the letters in dispute, and she knew that what she was to write in court might betray her as completely as if she were to confess herself the author. Her writing would betray her, and it would betray her son."

I do not feel that I am privileged to say how that case was decided. . . . .

Often letters offered as evidence in divorce proceedings are questioned as forgeries. Inevitably this requires the services of a handwriting expert. Repeatedly my father was retained in cases of the sort. In that faithfully kept diary of his which he called his "scratch," I found a notation of his entrance into such an affair.

"Mr. B—," he had written, "called on me with his counsel, and wants me to examine a certain letter which has been offered in court for the purpose of upsetting the decision of the jury in the case of Mr. B— against his wife, decided some weeks ago against her. Mr. B— claims that he didn't write the letter and wants me to examine it, if the other side will permit. I am to hear from them in the morning."

The man in this case was a vice-president of one of New York's greatest financial institutions. His appearance was appropriate for his position. The rising men of Wall Street banks are as carefully uniformed as soldiers. Their cravats must be subdued in hue; their shoes must be polished; their suits must be as conservative as the bonds they recommend, even though their nostrils flare when they sniff perfume. Mr. B—'s appearance conformed to the standard that is set by the old men of the Street. His ability in finance was considerable. He was a middle-aged bachelor at the time his bank selected him to go down South on a mission designed to bring to it a larger share of the flow of gold that comes in the wake of cotton when it is marketed.

In one of the great cities of the South he was introduced by an influential man of the community to a young woman of flashing—according to the newspapers—beauty. She was, he was told, a member of one of the first families of the South. Her home, he was told, was in another Southern State, where her people were dominant figures. The New York banker, who would have inquired with pains-taking thoroughness into the true values behind any handsomely engraved stock or bond that was offered to him for purchase, married this young woman after a brief courtship.

At some time in the course of their acquaintance the banker discovered that if there was good blood in this young woman's veins, it was illegitimate. She was one of three daughters of a woman who had never troubled much about marriage contracts, with the result that none of the daughters was more than half-sister to the other. He discovered also that his wife had spent a part of her life in an orphan asylum and part in a questionable neighborhood of the city where she was born. There were other discoveries likely to be painful to a husband in love with his wife.

The banker resigned his position before taking steps to free himself from this woman. Then he sued for an annulment of their marriage on the ground that he had been deceived as to her past. In defending the suit the wife contended that her husband had known the situation before their marriage.

THE man won a partial victory, the court holding that he had established his contention that his wife had misrepresented the facts about herself, but chided him for his failure to exercise a proper diligence before entering into a marriage contract. The woman then asked for a new trial of the case on the ground that she had fresh evidence that her husband had known the unpleasant truths before their marriage. It was at this point that David N. Carvalho was brought into the case. The fresh evidence to which the wife referred was some writing which she permitted the New York newspapers to publish. Seemingly it was a letter that her husband had written to another woman. It read:

"My Darling: On the way to court this last day—and liberty—and you. Yes, darling, I am ashamed of the accusations against Mildred, all of which are wholly unjust and untrue. I know I will never cease to regret. Too bad, that I may have you. I believe sincerely that Mildred is a good woman, and I respect and honor her loyalty to the absent sister. That was to be expected, but under the present circumstances it would serve no purpose to engage in any discussion of these distressing matters even with you."

If the husband had written this letter there could be no doubt that he lacked proper grounds in asking for an annulment. But he had not written it. My father's microscope revealed that it was a traced forgery. All the words in the letter had been written by the husband to his wife. In fact, his letters to her were the raw materials of this forgery. The sum of the words that he had employed in those letters was the vocabulary to which the forger was limited in composing the fictional exoneration. Tracings of the needed words were in turn retraced until there had been created the somewhat incoherent "love" letter reproduced above.

After my father had testified, the banker was permanently relieved of his obligations to this woman. A judge signed an interlocutory decree annulling the marriage. The woman was indicted, but not prosecuted, for forgery. The husband declined to press the case.

(Please turn to page 146)

Soldiers' Mothers



The author is one of the few men who brought from the war the capacity to reproduce in words the ordeal of battle.

By Hendrik Van Eeghen

Illustrated by George Wright

PRIVATE ALFRED AUGUSTUS DYER, hundreds of years ago known to his friends and relatives as Elf, and during the last hundred years or so of warfare as Number So Much, Royal Blanks Infantry, slid into a shell-hole and slept.

Not for days, weeks, years, he would have sworn, had he felt anything so comfortable as the muddy edge of that shell-hole. Nor, he swore, had he any intention of sleeping in it. Still, the lump of earth under his head, the way the rounded edge of the shell-hole fitted into the small of his back, the pleasant airy feeling in his legs as they sagged easily, effortless, into nowhere—this God-given relief acted as an anesthetic. Before his dead-tired brain could signal for another mighty effort, he slept—slept while the ground beneath him trembled and the sky above was split and shattered into blinding fragments of light, or became a heavy mass of suffocatingly solid darkness; slept as though he too were one of the mangled, half-buried dead that slept on all sides of him. . . . . The past three days and three nights he had spent sleepless in a world gone mad; seventy-two hours of fighting, of scuttling back to ruined villages, only to leave comparative safety for almost certain death in order to cover a retreat which, as far as one could tell, had degenerated into a rout—the devil take the hindermost.



Even to Elf, seeing nothing of the actors in this drama, the silence was pregnant with tragedy.

March 1918: chaos.

How chaotic the situation was, neither the Private Dyers nor, on the other side of No Man's Land, the Private Schmidts, blindfolded opponents, had the vaguest conception. Neither knew his own whereabouts; nor did they care—during those days of fighting each other over shell-blasted country, through shell-riven villages, in shallow, hastily dug entrenchments. Until:

"Gawblimey," Elf had said. "Gawblimey if I don't see a house wot aint bin wrecked."

So far had the maligned Fifth Army retreated.

They had plodded on, bone-weary, caked in a mud of sweat and dust, in the stench of their unwashed bodies; plodded on, too bestialized by fatigue even to think of hoping that an unscarred village might mean a few hours' rest.

The sun was setting as they slouched into Colombier to the sound of shuffling, dragging feet. The vil-

lage, deserted, had only been recently evacuated. The smoke of wood-fires mingled with the smell of the manure-heaps carefully piled before the larger houses on each side of the broad cobblestoned street.

For some time the sound of artillery fire had been diminishing. The growling, accompanied by sporadic bursts of noise as of blows on drums grotesquely huge, still continued; but the initiated thought that the German gunners were finding it difficult to keep pace with their infantry.

In the center of the marketplace an old fountain played a gentle tune with its tinkling stream of crystal water, while round about it the shadows of coming night thrust into an obscure background the rectangular monstrosities of the modern "Mairie" and the shops and restaurants of the 90's.

"This is a little bit of awl-right," Private Dyer had announced. He had drunk like a horse at the fountain, discovered a sheltered corner, and was prepared to sleep where he fell.

At that moment, with wide-open exhaust, a dispatch-rider on a motorcycle swept into the marketplace. With a screech of brakes he had stopped his machine. They knew him to be a bearer of evil tidings and hated the widespread legs which supported his roaring motor, and the air of self-sufficiency with which he fumblingly groped for his dispatch. He handed it to a prematurely aged lieutenant, slapped the receipt into his case, and with unnecessary noise and the conceit of a trick rider, turned his motorcycle into the sharpest of curves and disappeared.

Then followed confusion and curses. Some there were who, with face buried in hands, wept piteously, as tired children cry on long Sunday walks. Others there were who would be bloody well damned if they were going to march another step; and some took their places in the ranks dazed and indifferent, sleepwalkers, or walking corpses. But there were still others, sergeants and corporals with blistering vocabularies, who herded the troops into some sort of formation and marched them out of the village in the direction from which they had come.

As they passed the last house of that peaceful village of Colombier, the curtains of a window were drawn aside. If each man's eyes had not been fixed, like a hypnotized hen's, on the backs of the boots of the man in front, some of them might have noticed the pale, piteous face of a woman. It disappeared with the shriek of the shell which scattered into a million fragments the musical old fountain in the middle of the marketplace.

That ancient juvenile, Lieutenant Spikes, was worried. The opinion of the company optimist, that the enemy's advance had been held up, lacked conviction. Lieutenant Spikes had been heard to ask why the hell the others had not fallen back with his crowd. How could he know that right and left flanks of neighboring detachments were in the air? Why had some one not told him to wait, instead of sending him back miles to fill a gap which should never have existed?

"Got to give some ruddy gunner time to save his blinkin' outfit, I s'pose," he had said, and shrugged his shoulders.



If each man's eyes had not been fixed on the boots of the man

It was dark when the word to halt was passed down the line. With unconscious irony they were told to stand easy. Above the heads of a group of officers shone the faint reflection of an electric torch on a map; otherwise one could distinguish nothing in that dense blackness which seemed to weigh on one, to add to the already unbearable burden of the leaden equipment. Men's hands resting on the ends of rifle-barrels made cushions for foreheads, tin hat pushed well to the back of the head. There were hoarse whispers, the scraping of feet; low, throaty curses, and now and then a groan, a bitter, angry laugh. Mechanical, unavoidable noises seemed deliberately deadened as if rifles themselves, accidentally dropped, tried to fall quietly. Even inanimate things seemed to feel the tension of suspense, to react as human beings in an atmosphere fraught with anxiety.

Private Alfred Dyer stood with his arms crossed on the muzzle of his rifle. His brows were raised in a painfully sustained effort to keep open bloodshot eyes peering almost blindly through narrow slits. Occasionally his eyes would close and his nose would jab his forearm, jerking him back to semiconsciousness.

At intervals the crash of a shell falling into the deserted village would drown the whispers, the grunts and the curses which accompanied the efforts to ease the weight of galling equipments.

Husky voices passed words of command, and there followed once more the shuffle of tired feet on the graveled highway. With



in front, some of them might have noticed the pale, piteous face of a woman.

movement the tension slackened, and as they obeyed the order "Right wheel!" they subconsciously realized that it was given in sharp, clear-cut voices which dissipated the atmosphere of uncertainty that, for all their weariness, had made the men fidgety and critical.

Gradually the line thinned out as it stumbled over a plowed field toward a mass still blacker than the surrounding darkness.

"La Joyeuse Farm," announced Lieutenant Spikes. "What's in a name?"

He stood under the arch of the broad doorway through which one could imagine rather than see the huge yard with its mountainous dung-heap and the long low barns which enclosed it.

From the straggling line which filed past him he collected subalterns with four days' growth of silky hair on their chins and hoary N. C. O.'s who peered through bristles as tough as a boar's. To these his instructions were concise to the point of laconism.

"Dig yourselves in and hang on until you get the order to retire; if you don't get the order, hang on."

So Private Alfred Dyer dug. He dug as he had been taught to dig; he dug with the mechanical perfection of a robot, which, to all intents and purposes, was exactly what he was.

The shelling of Colombier continued in desultory fashion. One hardly noticed the smacking cracks. To the right and left the guns were mumbling, in Alfred's ears, almost peacefully. That aged youth, Lieutenant Spikes, compared the sound with the noise his father used to make when he pretended to be a giant eating naughty children. *"Fe, fo, fi, fum*—I smell the blood of an English-mun," with much licking of lips and deep, rumbling, horribly gluttonous noises in his throat.

" 'Ow goes it, Bill?"

Private Dyer, millions of years ago known as Elf, looked over the edge of the neat little grave he had dug for himself. A little conversation with his neighbor might, he thought, keep him awake; but he had his doubts about it. From the neighboring grave came the sounds of frantic scrapings of steel on rock, and a grunt which might have heralded the supreme effort of a Hercules.

" 'Ow goes it, Bill?" he repeated.

"Bloody awful, Elf," gasped a voice in the dark. "Bloody—great stone. . . . . Gawblimey, there she goes!"

"Fink we going ter stye 'ere, Bill?" asked Elf.

"Lorluvyah, nao," replied Bill the omniscient. "Tike it from me, when they marches you back from where you come and makes you dig like a sanguinary miner, it's all for nuffin. S'long I bin in the army, I never done nothing wot wasn't wyste o' time."

"Gawd, I'm tired—tired," whined Elf.

"Nah ven, you two washerwomen," growled their pet aversion, Sergeant Jenkins, an Old Contemptible, "when you've quite finished 'oldin' each other's 'ands and *(Please turn to page 102)*



Domestic and Business Entanglements

By Arthur K. Akers

Illustrated by Everett E. Lowry

Being a broadcast, from our own station A. K. A., of the most reliable reports of latest developments in Alabama.

IT was lunch time for Strawberry Street; but for Columbus Collins, colored, it was merely twelve o'clock. So Columbus rested his large feet and thin shanks on the windward side of Henry Roebuck's barbecue-stand in Demopolis, and tried to ignore the S. O. S. being sent out by his stomach.

As he rested, he thought. And thinking, he traced his troubles back to the Cosmogenic Detective School and Barber College in Birmingham that had taken five dollars from him in exchange for five lessons, a shiny badge, a diploma as graduate detective, and a license to practice private detecting in all its branches in the State of Alabama—plus the privilege of submitting five future cases to the school for advice on knotty points. For a week, now, Columbus had been a detective with nothing to detect.

But it began to appear that if he could not lunch, he could listen. For his location was directly opposite the home of Frisco Johnson.

In common with many small men, Frisco had previously appeared before the altar with an Amazon that ran strongly to voice and tonnage. Now the voice rang out regarding what Frisco had evidently been fondly hoping was his purely personal business.

"Keep on hangin' round dat 'Manuensis Jones' place! Jes' keep on!" Judy Johnson was telling Frisco, and incidentally the world. "—An' you gwine wake up wid yo' name all mix' up in de big chicken-house mystery, maybe!"

"Aint been round no chicken-house lately," denied her presumable lord and master in his smallest voice.

"Maybe you aint—but when whole hen-house git empty in less'n ten minutes, widout a squawk 'r a feather to show fo' hit, Cun'l Bob jes' natu'ally looks round 'mong de *experts* firs'! An' like I say, you keep on messin' round dat 'Manuensis, an' Cun'l Bob might overheah me say somep'n—"

"Sho would have to ride on train a fur piece to *keep* from heahin' you right now," grumbled Frisco sufficiently inaudibly for personal safety. Then, more loudly: "Dat 'Manuensis woman's face look like banjo whut ol' cow done step th'ough, but she got hund'ed dollars—"

"Yeah, an' de white folks still got room in de jail-house!" Judy returned to her former subject. "Nemmind is she got *two* hund'ed dollars—you know whut hit takes to keep me from talkin'!"

Fortunately Frisco had been edging well toward the gate before retorting, "I aint found hit yit." This policy saved him now as a flatiron took off two palings just east of his favorite ear.

"An' I wants a new suitcase, too!" she flung as a postscript after the iron.

"Pow'ful hahd to git on wid a woman," sympathized Columbus Collins as Frisco accomplished the width of the street in one leap, and sank warily upon a box beside one who was to complicate his life more than he then dreamed.

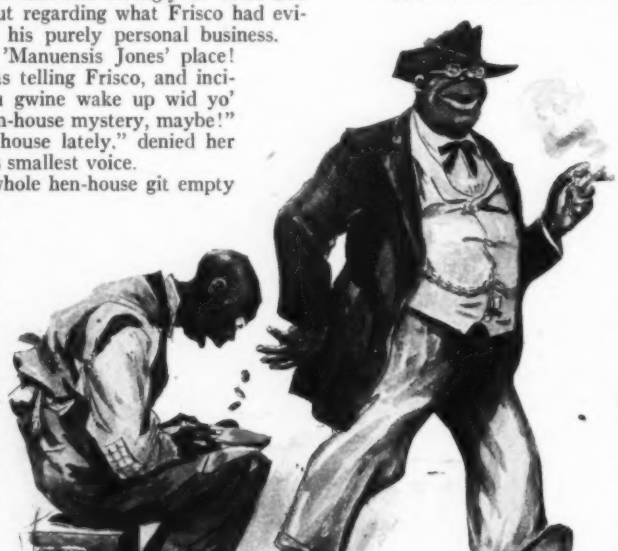
"Jes' natu'ally cain't do hit 't all—after dey ma'ies you," mourned Frisco. "Not even if dey git paht de money."

"Whut money? Never seed no woman fling no irons when you 'bout to fotch her money befo'!" Columbus evinced an interest in the main issue that was heart-warming to the harassed Frisco.

"Fat cullud lady name' 'Manuensis Jones," he elaborated to his new friend. "She de pres'dent de Lady Knights Temp'rance lodge heah. Keeps dey money. Lodge got hund'ed dollars aint doin' nobody no good. Dey's a crap-game down heah in Frawg Bottom whut my new bones knows de answer to. Dey lays jes' right to make two hund'ed out de one fo' me an' de lodge befo' mawnin'. . . . . Is you ever try talk a woman out of hund'ed dollars?"

Columbus indicated that he had heretofore limited himself to such lesser feats as going over Niagara in a barrel.

"Boy, you aint never done *nothin'!*" Frisco deprecated his deeds. "You got to staht soon an' talk sweet. Hit take mo' time dan raisin' a coon-dawg from a pup or gettin' credit at de sto'. An' if yo' foot slip jes' once, dey takes you up wid a broom an' shovel. Hit wuss'n tryin' to 'suade yo' wife she aint need no suitcase."



Samson G. Bates planted for himself the seeds of an unforgettable hour.

Then: "Boy, whut you doin' round heah? I aint see you befo'."

"Come from Yawk," responded Mr. Collins. "I's a dee-tective."

"Huh? Whut you *do?*"

"Finds out things. An' he'ps in 'd'mestic an' business 'ntanglements,' de d'ploma say."

"Sho is heap of big words," acknowledged Frisco. "How 'bout me an' you eatin' us li'l snack?"

Columbus entered the barbecue-stand without delay or noticing the screen door. Before the latter had been fully picked off of him he was half through a barbecue sandwich and a wedge of pie, and Frisco owed the proprietor three dollars for his famished guest's damages and diet.

"I pays you back fo' de do' later, or works hit out fo' you," apologized and proposed Columbus through a handful of crackers

grabbed from a bowl as he was being given the Demopolis version of the bum's rush by the irate Henry and Frisco.

"Work hit out fo' me how?" demanded Frisco.

"Dee-tectin'."

"Dee-tectin' whut?" Frisco thought of Colonel Bob unpleasantly in connection with the word. Get a detective and a big-mouthed wife mixed up in a boy's business, and the law-schools would have to put on night shifts of professors turning out all the attorneys for the defense he was liable to need!



She swayed and toppled toward Frisco. And with her toppled his immediate future. . . . . For Judy was only twenty yards away.

But Columbus' answer was in a measure reassuring. "How to fix up yo' business wid de lodge lady," he made explanation. "'D'mestic an' business 'ntanglements,' whut de d'ploma say."



"I pays you fo' de do' later," apologized Columbus as he was being given the bum's rush.

"Dat still aint say nothin' 'bout bustin' down no doors to eat," demurred Frisco dubiously.

"Sa'sfaction guar'nteed, or you gits new do'," continued Columbus in his sales talk.

"Got to git *somebody* he'p me, dat's a fac'," ruminated Frisco. "Dat hund'ed aint do *no*body no good now. An' only way I c'n keep down talk 'bout dat chick'n-house myst'ry an' suitcase is stay 'way from home."

"Huccome 'chick'n-house myst'ry'?" demanded Columbus, his detective blood stirred.

"Nothin', jes' some talk," Frisco sought hastily to change the subject. "Cun'l Bob cain't und'stand 'bout he chick'n-house bein' full an' quiet one time an' *empty* an' quiet jes' a few minutes later—an' not no feathers 'r tracks round aft'wahds."

Columbus tried to look like a bloodhound, but he changed the subject: "Show me de lodge lady."

Frisco glanced cautiously across the way. Another lady, who had been present beside him the time he overspoke himself in front of a preacher, was sitting grimly on his doorstep, a pair of kerosene lamps, and a carpet-covered brick normally used as a door-stop, resting convenient to her good right hand.

"Meet me in Willie Freeman's pressin'-club in 'bout a' houah," he suggested hurriedly. "Signs aint right jes' now." . . . .

Frisco limped into Willie's place an hour late. "Hit aint suit her fo' me to come right den," he explained. "Whut you fixin' do now?"

"R'arin' to dee-tect!" Columbus responded snappily under the sustained stimulus of the barbecue and the pie. "An' when I stahts, eagles digs deyse'fs holes."

"Le's go while my laigs still workin'," proposed his first client. But additional evidence was immediately educed that this wasn't Frisco's lucky day. Fresh symptoms of that fact appeared just ahead of them as they mounted Baptist Hill. A block in advance, and traveling at the gait that distinguished its owner when word of any loose uninvested funds reached him, a plump and prominent back loomed up, blotting out large portions of the Hill and Frisco's financial future.

"Dar go Samson G. Bates!" he groaned dispiritedly.

"Sho is gallopin', too!" commented Columbus admiringly. "Whut he gwine to? A fire?"

"Naw, he done heah somebody got money loose 'bout dey place. Dat big crook c'n see a dollar-bill th'ough a brick wall, an' talk hit out a safe wid fo' locks an' a po-liceman on hit."

"Reck'n we bettah see whar at he gwine tu'n in at," suggested Columbus further.

But there was no length to their suspense. Unerringly to the gate of Sister Amanuensis Jones, president and acting treasurer of Woman's Auxiliary Number Eighty-two of the Afro-American Knights of Temperance, went the businesslike feet of Mr. Bates. And two anxious watchers heard his knock and saw his invitation being extended him to enter.

"Hund'ed bucks, I kisses you good-by!" moaned Frisco despairingly without.

"Gittin' time to eat ag'in," offered the newly eminent detective after an hour had passed with Samson still inside.

"Cawst me three dollars last time you eats."

"Cawst you hund'ed dollars is I stahve to death befo' I gits dat money fo' you."

Faced with facts, Frisco compromised on fifteen cents in advance on account. Columbus excused himself, and returned with eighteen cold doughnuts. "Dey fills you up de firs' day, an' makes you too sick to keer nothin' 'bout eatin' de secon' day," he explained his menu. "Keeps down 'spenses dat way."

The eighteenth doughnut disap- *(Please turn to page 153)*



"Pow'ful hahd to git on wid a woman," sympathized Columbus.



Queer how surges of unhappiness could recede just as the waves did, and gather and break again, thought Janis.

Excitement

By Margaret Culkin Banning

Illustrated by C. D. Williams

The Story So Far:

WHEN Janis Ware went on to Long Island for the wedding of her half-brother Clem, she met a group of people very different from those of her native Midwest city of St. Anthony—in particular, Angel Baldwin, Clem's fiancée, who had been engaged before but had always shied away from marriage at the last minute. "I like excess," she told Janis once later. "When once you've tasted it, everything else goes flat."

Then there were Angel's hard-working business-man father, and her much-divorced-and-remarried stepmother Sally, who was even now contemplating still another shift of partners: Lord March, an Englishman of good position, attracted her now!

And there was Ben Towne, a young man who pleased Janis very much and who devoted himself to her; and on the glamorous evening before the wedding he kissed her unrebuked.

But only a little later Janis learned that Ben had been engaged to Angel Baldwin before Clem—was told that he still loved her.

"Don't you touch me," she cried furiously when he sought her again. "I'm no proxy!"

And when back in St. Anthony, a letter from him came to Janis, she returned it unopened—though later she learned it contained the news that Towne had taken a position with a St. Anthony law-firm and would shortly arrive.

Clem and Angel came on from their honeymoon, took a fashionable house—and proceeded to disturb the social serenity of the city, for Angel rebelled at humdrum things.

"Isn't there some way we can keep it for ourselves?" she said to Clem once.

"What, darling?"

"Marriage," she told him darkly. "I hate sharing it with so many people. I hate being another wife, another bride, another home-maker. Do I have to go through all the motions? Make a home—a nest?"

Angel's baby did not change her. Even as she had calmly played golf instead of ornamenting a reception Clem's distinctly Victorian Aunt Catherine gave in part for her, so now she ignored the solid citizens who bored her—and upon whose good opinion Clem's success was dependent.

Janis meanwhile was herself a center of interest. Ben Towne arrived and sought to convince her that his love for Angel was over. And West Sicard, a distinguished man she had met on Long Island,—a man in whom his wife Lise was not deeply interested,—sent Janis frequent gifts and presently turned up in person.

Janis liked Sicard. And one night when he had escorted her home from a country club dance, Angel feared there was some chance that Janis might like him too well. Anyhow, Angel brought a number of the party on to Janis' house, and pretending to have drunk too much, stayed the night herself. And because Clem could not understand her motive, this episode widened the breach which Angel's hectic pursuit of excitement and careless disregard of the town's social opinion had created. . . . . A marathon dance contest was held in the city and, to the scandal of the conservative element, Angel attended it frequently and encouraged the dancers, for the very excitement and excess of it. But she brought down upon herself and her husband only more scathing criticism.

Angel left this strained situation to pay a visit to her lonely father in New York—but found his lofty skyscraper apartment deserted; for Sally had decided against Lord March, and Baldwin had gone back to her.

High in the deserted New York apartment Angel faced what Sally had done—faced it looking out from the splendid height of the windows into a sky full of stars, and over a city where millions of lives flickered like the lights of the windows and the streets. Perhaps it was then that Angel looked past happiness into failure, for she had a bravery in vision. Or perhaps she looked over the edge of excitement and feared what she saw. Perhaps there was a tragic dread that she would be to her husband what Sally was to her father. Possibly she was more tired than anyone else knew. Or it may have been only that she grew dizzy. . . . .

Back in St. Anthony, Janis and Ben Towne were with Clem in the library when the telephone rang. He turned away from it and said in a dreadful vacant voice:

"They've—some one has wired me. Angel was in the apartment alone. She's fallen—it was so high—Angel—" *(The story continues in detail:)*

SALLY BALDWIN was in the peach-colored drawing-room of her Long Island house, with Janis. The salty breath of the ocean stirred the crisp silk of the curtains, and here and there a bar of sunlight lay flat across the rug. Sally had knotted a mauve scarf about her neck, and sometimes the sun touched that and found more of the rainbow it loved, or fell upon her indolent, beautiful hands, which had the cared-for fingers of a gentlewoman. Janis thought of Aunt Catherine's idea of Sally, and remembered Aunt Catherine's own hands, which were stubby and always a little red. Aunt Catherine often helped her housemaid to polish the silver, not because it was necessary, but she enjoyed supervising such things to a high point of perfection. It was funny.

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"You'd better come with us, Janis," said Sally.

Janis was thinking that all this might be two years ago. The house was so charmingly the same. She remembered the first time that she had seen those two lamps with the crystal bases. Sally had so many things about her which must be incredibly expensive. She had reopened this house since their hurried return from Europe. But she was soon to close it again, for Long Island was not quite mentally receptive now, and it would be impossible to stay here in semi-isolation. Sally was reasonable. She knew that all people asked was a little time, and she was willing to give it to them. She was the same Sally, apparently quite unscarred by whatever had happened between her and Lord March, or between her and William Baldwin subsequently, or by her deep, almost impatient pity for Angel's death. But Sally did not believe in allowing scars.

"Bill's keen about your coming. And you wouldn't find it dull. We'll manage to get to places at times when they're not too dreary. It would be good for you."

That was Sally, carelessly kind but competent too. Sally had known exactly what to do so often in these last few weeks. During the days when anguish blew them about, a wind in which they could not always keep their feet, Sally had kept hers. It was as if reality, no matter how stark or ugly, was no stranger to her. She knew how to treat it.

"It's very tempting," said Janis, "but I think I must go home."

"If it's just a matter of getting ready, you could wire for your clothes. Or for that matter, you'd have time to dash out for a day or two and get packed and still get off with us next week. You'll want new things when you get over there, anyway."

"It isn't just that. I think I'll go back and stay for a while."

"I don't see why."

"Clem went."

"There was no use talking to him."

"Well, his work is there. And so is the baby."

"But there's nothing for you, is there? You can't just sit around and watch that child grow up. Clem has a good nurse, and he intends to keep her. The child's all right, and Clem wants to be alone. Men get that way," offered Sally out of wide experience.

"Still, I think I'll go home. I'd like to breeze along with you, Sally. I'm glad Mr. Baldwin's going. He's bound to be better off with people who wont even think questions. Strange faces," said Janis, "are very peaceful. Last week I walked about New York to see all the people I didn't know."

"Then why on earth go back to a place that will be crazy with gossip? I know what it is. I lived in places like that. I don't wonder it got Angel. I told her it would."

Janis did not answer. She was wondering for the uncounted time if it had been that.

"The Sicards are going to be abroad at the same time. West is going to Africa first—some mining business. I don't suppose anyone knows how rich he's getting to be. I hope that he lets Bill in some deals. Lise's first stop-over is Biarritz. She says that she wants to get some of the taste of the Middle West out of her mouth. We'll probably get to Biarritz about the same time she does, and West will be along later. You and he hit it off awfully well, don't you? There'll be sports if you like that sort of thing. In the winter we'll try St. Moritz. And you'll be beautifully stared at. You need that. Everybody does. If you don't get it, your looks begin to sag. Even at your age."

It seemed preposterous, in the face of Sally's invitation, to know that she was going home. Not to Biarritz for admiration and clothes and highly sophisticated amusement and the deadening of pain and question, but back to St. Anthony, where grief would leap on her again and again, where she would be more lonely than she ever had been before, where she probably would be frowned upon and where, as Sally said, she could do nothing that was necessary.

And there had been other alternatives.

DURING those haunted walks through the New York streets she had thought of a dozen possibilities. There must be work to be had in New York, new friends and a change of direction. She could learn to do something, begin to weave living with different threads. But when she tried to imagine herself definitely embarked on such a scheme, it seemed as if it did not belong to her. One day she had even gone so far as to get a list of small apartments from an agent and went to inspect them one after another. In each place she had felt completely strange, with a strangeness that went deeper than unfamiliarity. She had had a sense of being almost fraudulent, as if she were using a false name. She imagined herself living in New York, tried to tempt herself with the thought of music and the theater and the ever-changing kaleidoscope of events. But it remained only a picture of life, with no reality to give it the dimension of depth.

There had also been the possibility of West Sicard. He had not been urgent, only doing the few things which he could to make the days less dreadful, with no reminder that he had recently been eager to do so much more. If she took Sally's offer and went with her on this extended trip, sooner or later West might come out of the background into the foreground. She could guess how it might happen. Perhaps in a different setting the denials which had been so imperative in St. Anthony would dissolve. Nothing was ever finally decided until it was made impossible. She thought of the release of floating out upon a great stream of people who would know nothing about her, who could make life almost anonymous, to whom it would matter so little what she did or did not do. But all the time she knew that she must go back, back to the commonplace house that belonged to her and the place where she belonged. Not that she was friendly to it. She was ready to do battle, to resent and defy it, perhaps. But to stay away was somehow disorderly, was evasion and retreat. To stay away was utterly lonely.

Such things were hard to put into words, even to formulate to herself. She certainly did not think that she could make them clear to the beautiful, poised, negligent woman before her, who used the world and life as if it were a shop where she could choose what she wanted, and where her credit was unlimited.

"I think I must go back for a while," she repeated.

Sally said surprisingly: "Oh, well, I supposed you would."

"Why?"

But Sally disliked the intricacies of discussion. She rose restlessly.

"I don't know," she said; "it's just the way some people are. It's the thing that makes them so sure of themselves and the things they are going to do."

"But I'm not sure of myself!"

"You will be. It's the fact of being somebody somewhere," Sally went on; "you don't get away from it. You've got to go back and be somebody! Whether you like it or not. March was like that. Nobody here feels much that way any more, at least not the people I know. And I came from the gutter, so I never did. It's the people who own banks in cities like St. Anthony, and who have traditions about housecleaning, or the kind that have estates in England—the same streak in all of them."

That was as much as Janis ever heard of the basic reason why Sally had not gone through with marrying Lord March.

Sally rang a bell.

"There must be some kind of drink that would make this day less annoying. It drags along like an old hag's skirt. I'm playing bridge tonight. Will you play? There'll only be one table. But we must do something. This hush is terrible. Thank heaven, we're getting away from it."

"I'm not in your class, but I'll play," promised Janis.

Sally was right. The hush was unendurable. It was impossible to try to adjust this shock and grief to the visible signs of mourning. They were all self-conscious as if they felt that even in death Angel would not want any excess of sentiment. But they were also at a loss. Under conditions when amusement seemed unfitting, there was so little resource here. Janis had been through the queer hush of days that followed death before, after her father's death, after her mother's. But that had been different. She tried to remember what she had done with her time then, and recalled slow hours spent at home. She had read a great deal during those months. People had come to see her, older people who knew her parents, to condole with her. None of that happened here. There had been shock and pain at Angel's death in hundreds of quarters, but it had not become quiet mourning. There was a wealth of flowers, but people whom Janis remembered as being fond of Angel did not come to see Sally. Perhaps there was nothing to say.

Even Janis and Sally did not talk much or freely. They motored. They swam in the early morning. But they could almost hear the restless beat of all the amusement, all the parties going on about them, and the days seemed immeasurably long without a quick succession of engagements. That was why Sally insisted on going away. The voyage would be a break, and gradually gayety, the only kind of life that seemed possible to Sally, could go on again.

Sally told the butler what she wanted to drink.

"I'll fix it so that you play with Peter Steele, and you wont lose too much if you happen to hold anything. Besides, you can afford to lose. Anybody who has pearls like yours. I meant to ask you: Is that by any chance a Rochstein string you're wearing?"

"Have the Rochsteins been missing pearls?" asked Janis. "And who are they?"

"Rochstein the jeweler. You know who he is. I saw the string that he had on display last spring and was making such a fuss about. I heard at the time that it was sold, but I never knew who bought it. Your string looks rather like that one, but of course it may have flaws I don't see. It takes an expert to know. Probably it isn't the same."

"I doubt it," said Janis. But she remembered as she spoke that it was the name *Rochstein* which was stamped in gold inside the velvet case which had held the pearls.

Sally laughed at her.

"You wouldn't be in any doubt if it was. He had a fancy price on it. But that one you're wearing was no bridge prize. I didn't know you were that rich."

"I'm not. These were a present."

"A present!" exclaimed Sally. "Well, I've had what I thought were popular moments, but nobody ever gave me anything like that out of wedlock. You certainly must have a doting relative. My pearls are a lot longer, but not nearly so well matched." She added: "People don't know that yours are real, do they?"

"No."

"I wouldn't tell it about too widely. It's a nice string to have your throat cut for, and you're traveling without guard. But of course you have to know about pearls to have any idea of their value. I shopped about for a long while before I got mine. That's why I'm so smart."

"My aunt—the one I live with—likes cut crystals better."

"Some people would wear rock salt," said Sally, "and think it was swell."

MR. BALDWIN came in. He was changed very little in appearance. There was the same aristocratic control and ease of manner, the same courtesy. But he gave Janis the impression of complete defeat. He had moments of abstraction, and Sally was apt to pull him back from them rather impatiently. It was as if she could not be kept waiting while he found a philosophy. There was too much to do that was amusing. Sometimes it seemed to Janis that Mr. Baldwin ought to be spared age. For what was he going to do with it? What could he do with it?

"Yes, I'll have one," he said in answer to Sally's first question. "It was hot in town."

"It will be cool on the boat," she answered. "Did you have Miss Devey look after passage for us next week?"

"I told her to see what was available. I've been waiting to make final arrangements until I knew whether we could persuade Janis to come with us."



"I wonder why I don't just keep you here," he said in a voice roughened with feeling, "until you love me."

"No. She wont," said Sally.

"I'd like to come. But I seem to be headed the other way. I think I must get off tomorrow."

"Tomorrow?" asked Sally, raising lazy eyes.

"We shall miss you greatly," said Mr. Baldwin.

That was all. He offered the same perfected courtesy that he had always shown her, the same courtesy with which he kept on treating life even when it mocked and scandalized him, as Sally's affair had, even when it turned upon him savagely with Angel's death. But there had been a few hours that Janis did not want to remember. It made this manner of his too terrible a mask.

The butler, whom Sally had summoned again, brought in several tall cool-looking drinks. Janis did not know what they were made of, but she took the one offered her. Perhaps it could take the deadness out of the air, relieve the oppression. That was all she asked of it.

"Bill, you can get a swim before dinner," suggested Sally. "Maybe Janis will go in with you. A little Belgian is coming down to do my hair, so I can't. He's probably crouched somewhere about now, waiting for me. Don't forget that bridge tonight, Janis."

When Sally had gone out of the room, there was a momentary silence.

"Before we have that swim," said Mr. Baldwin at length, "I wanted to speak to you for just a moment. In a talk we had before he left, Clem said something to me about personal things which had belonged to Angel. Angel had a small estate, a very

inconsiderable income from her grandfather, and some land which in time may prove valuable. Clem agrees that it should be held for the boy, although he personally does not wish to touch it. He has a very tragic sense that he made Angel unhappy, and that he has no right to anything of Angel's. He wished to send the things she wore and used to me. I tried to make him see it differently. I tried to make him see that if in any respect he had failed Angel,—and I do not believe he did,—that it was nothing compared to the way I failed her long ago. I gave her no mental security, no beliefs to tie to. I taught her no restraints. I think she was stimulated to exhaustion even before she married."



"I think she was terribly tired lately," Janis said. "She'd had so little sleep. But no one realized how worn out she must have been."

"She was very young to be so tired," said her father. "It's taken me fifty-two years to even approach it, and I think I shall never be—quite that tired. I hoped that when Angel married, she would find a new steadiness, a new enduring pleasure in the basic simplicities of living. But I see now that her taste for simplicity was destroyed. It was only trying to set the clock back, and it couldn't be done."

Janis said: "Every memory I have of her is honest and generous and brave."

"Yes. It was because her mind was so clear that she knew despair when she saw it. But Clem mustn't blame himself for that. In time he wont. He has qualities of adjustment. But it will take more than a few months, more than a year or two."

He paused. And Janis had no words to mitigate his pain. Like Angel, he seemed to have passed sentiment and all the common forms of comfort. The clock could certainly not be set back for him.

"But what I've started to say was that I suggested to Clem that Angel's personal belongings be given to you. He agreed. We both know how fond Angel was of you. When you find time, dispose of them as you think best. But perhaps

you will select some small thing for me, some trifle that she loved. You would know."

There were tears in Janis' eyes now.

"You must believe that she was happy," she told him. "There was something about her home that made it more alive than any house I've ever known. She loved Clem. She loved having her child. She believed in those things, even if she didn't show it in the obvious ways, even if they didn't hold her. People didn't understand that. But I know. For there was one thing she did for me, and never admitted having done, that proved it to me. It was because people were so small and narrow-minded, and because she was so tired—"

She broke off abruptly, afraid to trust her voice farther. Mr. Baldwin turned away and found a cigarette in one of the inlaid boxes.

"Are you quite sure this is the time for you to go home?" he asked.

"I can't seem to do anything else."

He looked very grave.

"Well, possibly it's better," he said at length. "Face it out while you're young. And now how about that swim Sally mentioned?"



"I haven't the faintest idea whether it is real or not," Janis answered. "Who has an eye on my pearls? Which of your guests is a bandit?"

Queer how it came and went like that, surges of unhappiness that could recede just as the waves did, and gather and break again. You had to swim through them, thought Janis, breasting the waves. The sun was still glowing, low in the sky, when she came out of the water. There were birds chattering somewhere, and a gardener was clipping a hedge into rude sculpture. In Sally's house the servants were moving about, doing exactly the right thing to make living charming and luxurious. Sally could always take care of the mechanism of things, and sometimes the mechanism was so perfect that it seemed to live.

Chapter Twelve

IN Chicago Janis was only one more well-equipped traveler, one more handsome girl in gray traveling clothes. Red-capped porters hustled her bags, and a taxicab jolted her from the station to her hotel. She had eight hours of waiting before the evening train to St. Anthony. There were plenty of people to whom she might telephone for companionship, and a cousin, living far out in the suburbs, of whom she always had been rather fond and who was always glad to send a car for her when she was passing through. But today she preferred a room in the hotel, taxies, shop-windows, solitude. In the afternoon she saw a hat in a display window which took her fancy and she went in to try it on and buy it. The hat encouraged her, cheered her up. It was so utterly disconnected with everything that was past. She had never seen the shop before nor the friendly saleswoman who admired her. And it was a friendly hat. The shape was one which she had never tried before; the color was blue, a soft, cool blue like deep water, that made her gray eyes less serious.

"Why don't you wear it?" asked the girl. "It's lovely with those clothes."

"I think I will," said Janis.

ALL sorts of things seemed to happen to her when she went out wearing that hat. An old woman who seemed quite respectable stopped her and begged a dollar, and Janis gave her two, without caring in the least whether that made them companions in fraud. She saw a girl meet a young man on the street-corner with a flame of love in her face. She saw a fight between two taxi-drivers, and one of them asked her to be a witness. And when she went into the hotel dining-room for a cup of tea a tired-looking man at a near-by table stared and stared again and, taking out a pencil, began to sketch her when he thought she was not looking. In a bookstore where she stopped for a book a very great author was consulting with the bookseller. All sorts of things seemed to be going on. She swung along with the crowd, a little reluctant to leave it when at last it was time for her train, and she followed her porter through the station, where hundreds of people were scurrying in all sorts of directions. Yet it was pleasant to have a direction of her own, to be going home. At this hour in the evening it seemed rather magic to think of the way so many thousands of people found their homes.

She tipped the porter and sat alone in her compartment, waiting for the train to start. Occasionally a familiar face lifted itself from the jumble of unknown ones which went past the window. There was old Mr. Penny, who had sold her shoes for years and years, wearing a yellowed straw hat. Fat Mr. Smallwood, suffering terribly from the heat. Judge Cady, limping a little. It was just the same as always. When you got on this train, you were almost home. You always saw people whom you knew. . . . .

But she did not see Ben Towne. He looked at her for a full moment before she was conscious of it. She was watching from her window and smiling a little, and the smile was still on her lips when his gaze drew her eyes. He looked almost puzzled. And she realized that she did not look exactly as might be expected, considering the tragedy from which she had come. It was the hat. "This is great luck," he said.

"I'm watching the neighbors," she answered. 'How are you?"

He said that he was very well and sat down on the edge of the opposite seat. He looked rather haggard for so young and well dressed a man. The heat and possibly other ravages showed in his face. Janis wondered how much greater his grief for Angel had been, because it was forced to be at least partly secret, and she spoke irrelevantly.

"Is this a good hat? I just bought it."

"Stunning."

They had not seen each other since that night weeks ago when he had taken her home in his car, waited while she packed her bags, driven her and Clem to the midnight train, bought their tickets and seen them off on that journey of horror. He had, she remembered, known the instant, necessary things to do, and quietly done them. All that came back to her in one of those sudden rushes of pain, to be fought down.

"Where have you been junketing?" she asked.

"Judge Cady and I came down to see about the settlement of a case. He's on the train."

"Yes. I saw him go by."

That was the best and the safest way, she thought. To be quite casual and let him think what he pleased.

"What about having dinner with me?"

"That's a noble notion."

"When do you want to go in? Early?"

"No. Later," she said.

"Then I'll come back about seven?" he asked, and she nodded.

SO there they were, facing each other across the dining-car table. Farms dimming in the twilight as the train fled past were like pictures, and the lights in isolated houses like low-hung stars. The air was cooler now, and they lingered over dinner.

"I feel as if I were just starting on a trip instead of finishing one," said Ben. "Are you sure this train is going in the right direction?"

She had been thinking the same thing, imagining how it would seem to be going away with a man and know that you were going on and on, that your journey was intricately his. She had been curiously tranquil for a moment, happy as she had not been happy for a long while. But she did not tell him that. Once she had told him too much. She had told him that she loved him, and he had kissed her, with another girl in his heart and mind. Was he thinking about that now, she wondered? Probably not. Even to her it seemed to have happened a very long time ago, before anything important had happened, before she knew very much what life was about. Yet it was only two years ago that she had waited for love as if it were a kind of graduation day. Now she knew better. There were all kinds of love—gin love, the kind one saw at parties and which anyone could have for the asking and drinking, and Tony's nervous, excited love, and the kind of love which Mr. Baldwin had for Sally, which was like poison, and West Sicard's love, which had to be hidden away, and Clem's troubled love for Angel, which had not been able to ward off tragedy. There wasn't any use in waiting for love as you did for clear weather. It didn't come that way. Or did it, to some people?

"Oh, yes, the train's going in the right direction," she answered, "straight to the city of all the commandments. I haven't any illusions about where I'm going or what I'm headed for."

"You still have your knife out for the town?"

She did not answer, and for a moment he watched her, a more lovely picture than she knew, with her face a little more fragile than it had been and far more wistful. He saw the tender hollow of her neck and turned to stare out over the darkening fields.

"Why don't you give the town an even break?" he asked.

"What do you mean?"

"Don't begin to hate it until you have to. Give it a chance."

"I've given it a chance for years."

"Not really. You don't know what it's about or what it's up to. You know a few hundred people and the expensive shops, and that's about all."

"And there's a lot more?"

"No end."

"Well, I may find it out. I think I'll find a job somewhere."

"That might do it. And it might not. If it's just one more débutante part-time job, it wont."

"What would?"

He drummed on the table and she laughed at him.

"You see you can't—when you get right down to it—tell me how to go about knowing the precious city better. Of course I might go about knocking at strange doors—"

"Well," he said, "I've an idea—and it may be quite cuckoo—that the best way to do it is just by being yourself."

"I'm traveling under my own name now."

HE paid no attention to that. He was absorbed in his idea, trying to think it through and get it out of thought into words.

"This is it. You've a position in St. Anthony. You belong there. You own property, and your father was a pioneer. Your money all comes from the town, and most of it goes back into it. There must be a lot of things for a person like you to do naturally, without taking a fake job. Some of those girls keep busy—Cora Fairburn, for example. She has no end of interests, and most of them are pretty sound."

She had been listening up to the time he mentioned Cora, fumbling after the idea with him. But as he mentioned her, Janis relapsed into mockery.

"All the non-alcoholics have noble interests," she said.

"You see, it's you who are prejudiced."

He signaled to the waiter to bring the check, looked it over and gave him a bank-note. The waiter hustled away for change, and Janis leaned toward Ben.

"You don't give me an even break," she told him. "You're always for the town. Attorney for the defense. You couldn't possibly take my side."

"I might."

"What would make you?"

"If you engaged me." He laughed. "Or if some court appointed me to defend you."

"But not otherwise."

"Yes. If—"

"If what?"

"If you happened to need me." And his steady gray eyes met her haunted ones.

The train jerked to a stop in a little town. Three or four streets backed away from the railroad tracks, with small automobiles cumbering them, and a few dreary street lights flaring. They walked through the train and stopped on the platform between cars to get a breath of air.

"What do you suppose happens in a town like this?" asked Janis.

"Pretty much what happens in St. Anthony or New York. You ought to study law. You'd be surprised at how few new crimes and virtues there are, and how thoroughly the old ones have got about. If you want a certain kind of life, all you have to do is to put in your order for it."





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"We will build a motor car for the great multitude. It will be large enough for the family, but small enough for the individual to run and care for. It will be constructed of the best materials, after the simplest designs that modern engineering can devise. But it will be so low in price that no man making a good salary will be unable to own one."

More than seventeen million Ford automobiles have been made since this announcement was first printed. The passing years have brought many changes—in appearance—in performance—in manner of manufacture. But there is one thing that has never changed—the fundamental idea behind the Ford car.

The Ford Motor Company was formed, and exists today, not merely to make automobiles, but to provide economical transportation for all the people. Far more important than the car itself is the part it plays in the lives, happiness, and the prosperity of millions of people.

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With the coming of the Ford, it became possible for men in all walks of life to enjoy the benefits of transportation that formerly had been limited to a fortunate few.

A great change came over the country and with it a new prosperity. By freeing the movements of men, the Ford also freed their thoughts and created new opportunities. The barriers of time and distance were broken down. Good roads followed close behind the automobile and the isolation of country districts disappeared. The nation grew as people learned to use this newly developed horse-power and fit it to their needs.

Into the hands of men of moderate means—to the workers in factories—to the toilers on the farm—was given a means to increase their income and enjoy the leisure which that increased income should bring. The working day became shorter because men could do in eight hours the tasks that previously had taken ten or twelve—and do them better.

Today, with all its improvements—with all its new beauty of line and color—with all the changes that have been made during the past twenty-one years—the Ford is still "a motor car for the great multitude."

Business of every kind moves forward at a faster pace because of it. To countless homes it brings the rewards of widening opportunity, happiness, and priceless hours of relaxation.

All of this not merely because of its safety, its comfort, its speed, its reliability, but because of a fundamental purpose that is greater than all of these. Because, in larger degree than ever, it provides economical transportation for all the people.

Ford

FORD MOTOR COMPANY
Detroit, Michigan



"Aunt Esther can't get hers filled," said Janis.

He laughed.

"You're too fast for me. Do you remember that when I first met you, you said that you felt like daily bread and the declaration of independence?"

"Did I?"

"Yes. And it's the way I feel now when you're around."

"You caught it."

"I think I did. You started me wanting something I wasn't getting, cruising around Long Island. You got me out here."

"Well, you like it, don't you?"

"Yes. It's an honest life. Most people have their feet on the ground. Maybe they are intolerant, but it's because they have traditions and beliefs, and that's a good thing. I like it."

"Then what more do you want?"

THE train lurched suddenly to a start, and Janis was jerked forward. Ben caught her, close against him, and after the second of steadying, when she tried to lift herself away, she found that he still held her.

"I wonder why I don't just keep you here," he said, in a voice that was roughened with feeling, "until you love me."

Her blood seemed to be rushing, her heart tumbling about.

"Because you can't," she answered, and pulled herself free. "That's why. If I conformed to everything you approved of, possibly you might let me compete with—Cora Fairburn. You've grown heavy, dull, pompous. You told me to be myself. That's what I'm going to be. And anyone who loves me has to love me as I am, without checking up every day to see if I have all the cardinal virtues. That's the way men should love women, Ben, if they love them at all."

"How do you know it isn't the way I love you?"

"How have you proved it?" she exclaimed with scorn.

He looked at her for a long moment, and then held open the heavy door, standing aside for her to pass.

"Good night. Your compartment's in this car, I believe—isn't it? Thank you for dining with me."

SHE lay awake for hours, while the stars outside seemed to sweep by in an endless flight. Sometimes she stared at them and wondered what they were about and how they had worked out that pattern in the sky. Sometimes she pressed her face against the hard little Pullman pillows and tried to stop its burning. She thought of Angel and that splendid vitality which an unintelligible universe had inexplicably reclaimed. She thought of Clem and how he must dread Angel's room, and wondered what could be done about that. Angel must be kept alive in that house, and the things she loved not hid from sight. She thought of queer things that would have to be done in her own home, like seeing that grape jelly was made and peaches preserved and a new carpet laid on the back stairs. And all the time she heard every footstep that passed her door, and wondered which one of them was Ben's and what he was thinking of. At every thought of him her blood ran hot again, but whether it was love or anger she did not know.

He did not pass her door at all until after she had fallen into a restless sleep. He sat in the club car, and even the porter drowsed off before Ben went to his berth. He had played several games of bridge with Judge Cady and Mr. Smallwood and some man from Chicago. There had been several remarkable hands. But after the older men had gone to bed, Ben still sat there, staring at nothing, smoking cigarette after cigarette, in an absorption that even remarkable cards could not account for.

IN the morning everything had gone a little flat. Drama seemed bled out of the world. Janis went into the diner for breakfast an hour before they arrived at St. Anthony, and was given a place opposite a beaming, brightly dressed lady who bought cosmetics for a department store, and was determined to start a conversation. Ben and Judge Cady were breakfasting together, evidently talking business, and Ben's back was toward her. He only offered a civil good morning as he went out, and it was the old Judge, her father's friend, who stopped to talk for a moment or two. This morning her new hat seemed not nearly as becoming and to arrive in it rather flagrant. And outside there was a gray day, weighted with tired clouds.

The city, as the train came into its outskirts, had the same familiar landmarks as always, the great butter sign high against the purple hill, the rope factory, the bridge across the harbor on which the train always halted, with its views of docks and tugs and freighters and, on the other side, a puzzle of railroad tracks to which some one must hold the key. She thought of what Ben had said, that she knew very little of the city. Perhaps that was true. She did not know who owned these boats or what they carried or where they were going. She did not know who lived in these sodden houses along the railroad tracks, or even the nationality of the district. A few hundred people, he had said, and a few good shops was all she knew of St. Anthony. But that wasn't true. She remembered stories her father used to tell, in his rare expansive moods, of savage storms on the lake, of streets knee-deep in mud, of days of financial panic when he carried a gun. No wonder he admired his solid house and its cement sidewalks and the bank building which still bore the Ware name.

CLEM met her. He was even thinner than when he had left Long Island, but he did not look so beaten. His manner was excessively practical and a trifle preoccupied. On the way to her house he asked her in one brief sentence if she would look after Angel's personal effects and added:

"I wish you'd take that roadster of hers, Janis. It's a little battered, but the engine's all right."

"Not her car!" said Janis, with an involuntary shudder.

"All right," Clem said. "I'll drive it out to the junk-pile and have them smash it up some day. I don't want it around—and I wont sell it. I thought you might find some use for it."

"Of course I can," she answered, changing suddenly. "I'd like to have Angel's car."

"Thanks."

He left her at her house, and at the top of the stone steps Aunt Esther was waiting, a little more fearful to behold than ever in a strange purplish dress with fringes. The house looked awkward and old-fashioned and tasteless after Sally's establishments. Janis thought with sudden temptation of the ocean, of Biarritz and unknown, bright, sun-filled places. If she wired and got off at once, she'd be in time.

"It's been lonely," said Aunt Esther; "you know how it is, in a big house like this. And I keep thinking of poor Angel. Like a bright spirit of modernity. That's the way she seems to me. You think my dress is suitable?"

"Suitable for what?"

"I don't like black," said Aunt Esther, "so I chose the half-mourning. You didn't go into black, my dear?"

"I don't believe in it," answered Janis, "not for Angel."

But if Aunt Esther was absurd and more than a little pathetic in her pleasure at having Janis home, Aunt Catherine was irritating almost beyond endurance. She came almost at once, the black electric parked pompously at the curb, and was avid for details. Janis was sparse with them.

"It's the baby I'm thinking of," said Aunt Catherine; "the motherless child!"

"Hasn't he a good nurse?"

"No nurse can take the place of a mother, my dear. Though I believe Angel saw very little of him. Of course I could have foreseen the whole thing! Is there anything to the story that the—accident—happened when she was intoxicated?"

"Oh!" cried Janis. "How abominable a story!"

Mrs. Winter was tolerant. She could be. She had been right all along and knew it.

"No doubt there's nothing to it. But it's been a very sad lesson. And perhaps a necessary one. Everyone's been very kind to Clem. He really should not blame himself. As I have said, ever since I found out that Angel had been for years under the influence of Sally Shendon—I suppose you couldn't avoid meeting that woman?"

SUDDENLY Janis started to laugh. She was seeing Sally again, with her lovely hands, and she saw Mrs. Winter's purplish knuckles and virtuous chapped lips. It was perhaps the best thing she could have done to gain a respite.

"Overwrought," signaled Mrs. Winter to Aunt Esther in an unaccustomed moment of coöperation, and after recommending that her niece lie down immediately, she went away.

Janis did not lie down. She unpacked her clothes and looked over her bills and talked to the cook about jelly and preserves. Later she would go to Angel's house, but not until she was quite steady. And she knew that with every hour that passed she was settling a little more and that she would not wire Sally that she was coming after all.

But she did not want to see Cora Fairburn. She had not answered any telephone calls, and Tony had sent her yellow roses. It was queer about Tony. He simply did not matter. He was as unimportant as a past party. She had almost forgotten him, and yet he was kind. But she did not want to talk to him just yet. She would not have talked to Cora, if Cora, with the tremendous privilege of old friendship, had not coolly told Aunt Esther that she would go upstairs and find Janis. She came into Janis' room with only a casual knock and stood there, a pleasant, healthy figure in her tan sport clothes.

"Hello," she said, "how are you?"

"Fine."

Cora sat down upon the bed.

"You've had a rotten time, haven't you? It must have been pretty dreadful."

"It was worse for some of the others."

"It was bad all around," said Cora, "but I can't help thinking—and I've thought of it a lot—how much worse it must have been for her."

JANIS looked at her in surprise, but Cora went on without noticing.

"I didn't know her very well, and she wasn't my kind of person. She was too subtle for me, altogether. But I was sick over it. And Elizabeth Fahnestock went all to pieces. She admired Angel immensely, you know."

"She never showed it." Janis' voice was bitter.

"Angel made a lot of us feel as if we had club feet," said Cora bluntly. "You do too, sometimes. But I've known you long enough not to have you put me off my game. Anyway, I'm sorry. I've wondered since if there was anything we could have done that we didn't do; after all, she was a stranger here—"

"I don't think so," Janis answered. It was so like Cora to look at it in that almost civic, impersonal way with straightforward, honest pity. But it was civilized too.

"Well, I'm on my way," said Cora. "I

just stopped in to say hello. Come in for lunch or dinner some day. And call me up when you feel like some golf."

"I will—soon," promised Janis.

She knew now that she was ready to go to Angel's house. The cherry-cheeked maid, still buxom but less spirited in her duties, let her in. Little Tommy was still asleep. Janis looked in at him, surprised at the way he had grown, even in three weeks. He didn't seem pathetic. He seemed healthy. It was Angel she could have wept for then, and again as she stood in Angel's room, with its glass wardrobes and delicate furniture and half-empty bottles of scent and even the books she had been reading. For quite a long time she stood there, and then rang for the house-maid.

"Debby," she said, "this room is very sad. It is a sunny room, and I think that Mrs. Ware would like it used. I think we are going to make this room the day nursery."

Chapter Thirteen

IT was winter again. Autumn had slipped into it almost imperceptibly, a long, bright, beautifully painted autumn which Janis had found absorbing, but not because of its chief events. Tony had again asked her to marry him, and quite permanently she had told him that she would not. He had given quite a party to celebrate his disappointment. Rose Jones told Janis about that. But Janis knew it was Tony's only method of expression and did not condemn him for it. She had not gone with the Fremonts to Deershot though it was an open season on partridge and Chinese pheasant, and the company was to be very spirited. And yet she had not been dull. It was astonishing how many unexpected things turned up to be done.

She was looking after some of her own investments. Uncle Will Winter had been skeptical of her inquiries at first, but when he saw that she meant it, he had explained dozens of things to her, taking a kind of pride in her natural astuteness and even encouraging a modest flyer in the market.

"All women need to do is to keep their heads and to take advice. But you'll find most of them wont," he would say to her, and then drop in to boast of her to Clem.

There had been a hot political campaign and Janis had let herself be drawn into that a little. She had not done much more than taking a hand at registering party preferences and distributing literature, but those hours in the political headquarters, with their swarm of all kinds of women, had never seemed long. She thought a good deal about politics. If she learned something about that, there was no reason why she should not have at least a finger in government. Somebody had to do the governing, and perhaps it was people like herself who did not need to earn money who should take on some of that burden. She liked some of the women who came campaigning, and found the pretensions of some of the others appalling.

And Cora had hounded her until she went on the board of managers of the new hospital.

"But I know nothing about hospitals," she protested.

Cora said: "Go ahead and learn something. They've got to have a young woman, and everybody else is all tied up. Elizabeth's having another baby and had to resign. Be a sport."

That was why Janis had learned about physical-therapy rooms and how many charity patients hospitals carried, and the cost of maintaining them. . . . .

So she had not gone job-hunting. The days seemed to take care of themselves, to fill up to the brim, as if there were a spring of natural interests beneath them which she had come upon. They were always glad to see her at Cora's or Clem's houses, and there were plenty of other parties. She had not avoided contacts, and a good many of them were not the kind that the Fairburns gave. But when she free-lanced a little it was astonishing how many different kinds of people she found in the city.

THERE was, for example, the woman who painted, Nelly Mescal. She had done rather well. Some of her pictures were on exhibit in leading galleries, and some had sold to advantage. She lived in a little shingled house quite off the main line of society, but all kinds of people came to see her. Janis found that in St. Anthony there were other men and women who painted and could talk fluently about the different schools of modern art, that there were people who wrote poetry or prose, or tried to act, restless people hunting for a medium to express themselves. Nelly Mescal had admired Angel from a distance and met her once. She had done a sketch of her at the marathon, which Janis bought and put away. She liked it, and some day Clem would, though it was no time to show it to him now.

Nelly Mescal had abominable liquor, probably because she herself did not drink. She did not care in the least what other people did, if they would clear out of her way as soon as her desire to have company was spent. She was a faded woman of thirty-six who looked like a tired middle-class matron, and she had a mind which could flash like steel and then become dull as butter.

It was very interesting; and Janis, having been taken to her house once, went again, shortly after she bought Angel's picture. And one day in that crowded little sitting-room, where people were standing about talking a great deal and drinking somewhat at random, Janis met Ben.

Not for the first time, of course, since they had dined together on the train. She had seen him at dinner at the Fairburns one night. She had played bridge with him at Clem's house. It always surprised her that she could be in the same room with him for an hour, sometimes for an evening, and not even like him, and then some turn of his head, the touch of his hand, would bring it all back again. She told herself furiously that it was nothing but the simplest sex attraction. She tried to despise herself for it. And all the time she knew that the most delicious gamble of each day was the chance of meeting him.

SHE was surprised to see him at Nelly Mescal's house.

"How do you happen to be here?" she asked.

"I like to come. I'm fond of Nelly."

"She doesn't seem your kind of person."

"You're always so sure of my tastes," he said. "Why don't you leave them to me?"

"Still anyone who plays around with the Fairburns and the Fahnestocks seems a little out of place here."

"You're describing yourself," he reminded her.

He still had a boy's face, she thought. But there wasn't so much of a smile in his eyes as there used to be.

"I'm different."

"And so am I," he said stubbornly, "though you give me no credit for it."

"How did you come to know Nelly?"

"How does anyone know Nelly? Or keep from knowing her? I had Sunday night supper with her once, and then we were friends. I think perhaps she's a genius."

"A good many people think that," said Janis. "Do you want some tea? Or gin? It's terrible stuff—rubbing alcohol, I think. How about a massage?"

"I don't want anything except to talk to you. And to have you care just a little whether I'm alive or dead."

She could feel him winning her again, making her feel sick and faint and joyous and full of that maddening confusion of emotion.

"I'll care—in that limited way," she promised.

"Then sit down and let me tell you how beautiful you are. Every color you wear is the only color you should always wear."

"Splendid," she said; "you should sell that sentence!"

"I'm trying to. You ought to hear the things I think of nights to say to you."

She dropped her mockery.

"Do you truly, Ben?"

"I've never seen anything finer than the way you've handled everything in these last months."

It sent a little thrill of pride through her. She too liked these last months.

"Oh, you're just approving of me. This is the monthly report card. I've been a lady, have I?"

"Well," he said, "yes, if you put it that way. You are a lady—just as you were meant to be."

It was just then that Nelly Mescal came up with her curious near-sighted intentness. She slipped an arm around Janis, but her eyes were on Janis' throat.

"I never knew that string of pearls was real," she said.

"Didn't you?"

"But some one over there says that it's fabulously valuable."

"I haven't the faintest idea whether it is real or not," Janis answered. "Is there still tea, Nelly? And who has an eye on my pearls? Which of your guests is a bandit?"

"He hasn't admitted that. He only claims to be a jewel expert. He says he matched that string for some New York jeweler last year and they sold it to some man whose name I don't remember. Who's your rich friend, Janis? Or has the jeweler had too much of my deplorable gin?"

JANIS only laughed. She did not look at Ben, but she was sure he was looking at the pearls. Of course sooner or later it had been bound to happen. She had known, ever since Sally admired them, that there would be others who would guess or know their value. But she had worn them none the less. They had been a comfort, a tangible reminder of devotion and deep understanding. Well, she could not tell Ben that. He must think what he pleased, and her mind went sick at the thought, so she laughed a little more gayly.

She was leaving the house when Ben caught up with her and her heart missed a beat.

"Walking?" he asked.

"I need some exercise, and it's a wonderful twilight."

"Wonderful," he agreed, a little absently.

Snow had begun to fall in great, dry, fluffy flakes, and the last brief glow of the sun was fading. They went along silently matching their steps.

"Nice little houses," she said at length, looking at a row of suburban cottages.

"Noble little houses," he agreed. "You've no idea how they struggle to get paid for, and how desperate a fight it is sometimes."

"How do you know?"

"I do the legal end for a building-and-loan society. They put up quite a few of these houses, and I draw up the contracts and take the grief."

"Do they cost very much?"

"It depends on your standards. I suppose you could get half a dozen of them for one of your pearls."

"How do you know?"

"I heard what the little bounder said they were worth. It was his chief topic of conversation. And it seemed untactful to push his face in at the moment."

They went along, again silently. Boys were coasting down the hills and shouting

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MRS GIFFORD PINCHOT II

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LOVELY young Parisian—welcome to America! Born and bred in France, you bring its sunshine in your smile. Tell us your French philosophy of beauty! What is the secret of your inimitable charm?

"This is our rule," says beautiful Mrs. Gifford Pinchot II. "Be always meticulously groomed, *toujours soignée!* For beauty in France is chic, and chic is smartness, simplicity, fastidious perfection of detail.

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(left) *On her Florida honeymoon, this young Parisian discovered the delights of deep-sea fishing.*

(right) *Pond's four delightful preparations—famous Two Creams, Cleansing Tissues for removing cold cream, and fragrant Skin Freshener to banish oiliness.*



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to each other. The snow was like a mist about them.

"Will you marry me, Janis?" Ben asked, suddenly, with no approach or prelude.

SHE did not answer, and he said nothing more. They went through streets that seemed unknown, and now and then at a crossing his hand touched her arm.

"Janis—you haven't answered me," he said at last.

"West Sicard gave me these pearls," she answered. "Did you know that?"

"I heard that fellow say Sicard bought them. I supposed that he had given them to you."

"Are you asking me to marry you because you think I may need defense? Is that it? To protect my name if this gets about?"

"I'm asking you because I love you."

"He gave me the pearls because he loved me," she told him bluntly.

"And so do I," said Ben, "and I have, through these two long years. I've come to the end. I can get along without you if I must. But not if I'm going to be where you are. If you wont have me, I want to get away. I've had enough."

His voice was almost angry.

"You don't ask about the pearls. You take a lot on faith."

"I intend to when I ask a girl to marry me. But if you want to be questioned, I'll do it. Do you love Sicard?"

"No."

"And did you?"

"No."

"Then what do I care about the pearls? Wear them—or lose them. I'm asking you to marry me. Don't you understand English?"

"But suppose we make a mess of it," she said desperately; "suppose it isn't a success?"

He turned full upon her, and they stopped, facing each other through the snow. The street was dark and quiet.

"You have no right to think of it like that. You're young and beautiful and healthy. I have work to do, and so have you. It's your business and my business to make a success of it! Why should you be so afraid? All around here, in these hundreds of little houses, they're putting it over in spite of handicap. For one that fails, there's a hundred who don't. Why should we even think of failure, with the luck all our way? We both believe in the same things, no matter how you deny it. There's only one reason." He stopped and put it as a statement, almost an accusation. "You don't love me."

"But I do!" she cried, as one who has heard truth insulted.

The snow fell tenderly about that first embrace of passion and faith.

THE END

SOLDIERS' MOTHERS

(Continued from page 87)

kissin' good-night, p'raps you'll get on with that job o' work."

Mechanically Elf deepened his neat little grave, sobbing vitriolic anathemas against war and all those set in authority over him. The long hours of night dragged slowly on.

"Covering retreats is rather like saving the rubber at bridge," said Lieutenant Spikes to a boy whose eyes suggested a long and misspent life. "Go see if you can get anyone on the wire; I don't want to be forgotten. If there's any fighting-to-the-last-cartridge business to be done, I should like them to turn the spotlight on me."

"Must have been telepathy," said the boy as he returned after an absence of but a few minutes.

A message had come through at last. They were to fall back on Colombier, where they would receive further orders.

"Wot did I tell you, Elf?" breathed Bill.

ONCE more the weary troops were bullied into some semblance of order; once more with knees bent, backs bent, with chin on chest, the remnants of a regiment dragged itself over the rough, uneven fields. The road they left to their right. Their path would skirt Colombier and avoid the sporadic shell-fire which was still chiefly concentrated on the deserted village and the ground immediately in front of it.

It seemed hardly possible that anything could be blacker than the darkness which enveloped them; and yet they could distinguish vaguely the still more solid ebony of the village houses on their right front. The ripping crash of a shell was followed by a moment's silence, and then by the dull, rumbling roll of collapsing buildings.

With incurious eyes the men glanced indifferently in the direction where, unseen, the shells were bursting. The bombardment did not affect them; they were spectators, or rather actors bored insufferably by endless repetitions and rehearsals. They did not even formulate the thought that they were glad they were being spared. And yet, to those who were not past all sensation, it seemed that either they were approaching a danger-zone, or else the German guns were searching for them. In front, slightly to their right, four shells fell in quick succession. A ripple passed through the column as some men slowed their pace and some stopped dead, like balking horses. Nearer this time, and almost simultaneously, more shells dropped with sharp, cracking smashes.

Faces were raised, heads turned right and left; men came to life and looked from side to side with a kind of fresh-awakened curiosity. Excitement ran like electricity through frames which, until then, were immune from all emotions. Whistles blew; sharp orders were snapped out, drowned in the air-ripping *crash-crack-thud* of exploding shells. Automatically the column disintegrated, scattering in extended order to dash blindly through a zone of death in which each individual felt himself the sole mark, the unique prey of a monstrous killer of men.

"I gottah get aht of 'ere," Elf had said to himself, and proceeded to do so.

He was not frightened. The situation was not one to cause fear. It induced very deliberate concentration on ways and means of removing oneself. It was somewhat like being chased by a bull: one ran. The question of doing anything else did not arise; nor did one picture to oneself the details of death by goring. One was alone in a field with a bull; one was alone in a world full of bursting shells. Whether it were bulls or shells, one was the sole object of their attentions; so one ran. One did not think of doing anything else, if indeed one thought at all.

It was then that Elf slid into a shell-hole and slept.

Now, during an advance under murderous fire a shell-hole has frequently been known to have an irresistible attraction, and some men have stayed in them longer than was consistent with that élan and contempt for death which a decorative G. H. Q. has every right to expect. During a retreat, however, there is a marked desire to put the greatest possible distance between oneself and the unhealthy spot on which an unjust fate has dropped one. There is no doubt, then, that Elf would have staggered on to safety had his legs been capable of carrying him.

The bombardment had not been of the severest kind. *"Pour acquit de conscience,"* also because he was nothing if not thorough, some German gunner had swept the section on the intimation by a scouting Fokker that movements of troops had been observed on the preceding day.

There was a glimmer of dawn in the sky when Elf awoke, a stroke of lighter hue than the rest of the gray bowl above his head.

Elf lay in what had once been a meadow, a pasture of rough grass and weeds. A hundred men had been digging, spasmodically and without system, ceasing after turning a few spadefuls in one hole, scattering tawny-colored earth and feverishly starting new excavations as aimless as the old. Deserted fields stretched on all sides, mingling in the half-light with the encroaching clouds. Only the ruined village, a few hundred yards away, broke the monotony. Here and there grotesque dummies lay in uncouth attitudes, as unnatural as the jettisoned cargo of a traveling waxwork show.

It was some time before Elf realized where he was or what had happened to bring him there. The air vibrated to the sound of very distant guns; a bird was calling, and a cock crowed discordantly. The strip of silvery gray was spreading up the sky. It was peace in a desolate, deserted world. A cataclysm had destroyed the universe; Elf, a songbird, and a cock were left.

A FEW hours of deathlike sleep had restored Elf's energy. He was not one to moralize, to "postmortemize;" nor did abstract thoughts trouble his illiterate mind. The war had given him the realization of but two forms of existence; and to describe his sensations, but two expressions. He was either comfortable, which was seldom; or uncomfortable, which was often. In the first case, he said it was "a little bit of awlright;" in the second, he said: "I gottah get aht of 'ere." Beyond that, his mind refused to work and would always have remained fallow, were it not from time to time employed to use the low cunning which was necessary to avoid work and the detection of petty thefts. He was a scraggy little product of London's slums, and in his infancy probably preferred gin to his mother's milk. But he had the eyes of an angel to hide his mean little soul; and this, a million years ago in the petrol-drenched air of London's muddy streets, had been an asset of no small financial value. Sleep had brought light to those valuable eyes; and mission workers would have wept to think that carnivorous Moloch could have had the heart to eat this angel child.

The situation no longer meeting his ideas of comfort, he applied the formula which the occasion required. Slipping a clip of cartridges into his rifle, he slowly and stiffly dragged himself out of the shell-hole and walked, a dim, indistinct figure in the false light of breaking day, with caution toward the village. He thought that the company to which he belonged was to have taken up a position on the other side of Colombier, and there was no reason for him not to expect to find them there. An exploration of the village would not unduly delay him and might, with luck, produce some forgotten trifles which, going by the generic name of souvenirs, included everything portable and of value.

In an early number we will publish a story that is delightfully new and fresh and youthful

"The Soul Saver"

by Hilda Mauck

who is just now making her reputation in the pages of this magazine.



"Marvin T. Jones, *look* at that towel!"

WE SYMPATHIZE, Mrs. Jones. It does seem as though your husband might have put off using that pet towel until sometime when he hadn't been fixing the car.

Yet, maybe it isn't such bad luck after all! You've probably read about Fels-Naptha Soap and its *extra* help. This rather stubborn washing job is an opportunity to try it out—and what you learn, will make *all* your washing easier.

Get some Fels-Naptha, Mrs. Jones, and meet this *extra* help face to face. Unwrap the bar and smell the naptha. There's plenty of it . . . and naptha is the safe gentle dirt-loosener that dry cleaners use. So Fels-Naptha brings you two cleaners instead of one—not "just soap," but good, golden soap and plenty of naptha, working together.

Now wash your "almost ruined" towel with Fels-Naptha—and watch as you wash. See how easily the brisk, busy soap and naptha suds loosen the dirt. See how even grease smudges come off without hard rubbing. Then, as you rinse it, look! It's fresh and spotless; and with so much less work on your part than you expected! That is what we mean by *extra* help—that is what Fels-Naptha brings you, whether you are doing a single piece or the weekly wash.

Fels-Naptha works well in washing machine or tub; in hot, cool or lukewarm water or when the clothes are soaked or boiled. It is gentle both to hands and clothes. It is excellent for general household cleaning, too. Just try it for any soap-and-water task, Mrs. Jones, and we're certain you too will agree that "Nothing can take the place of Fels-Naptha."

P. S. to brides: Don't wait until your husband misuses one of your "show" towels! Put Fels-Naptha on your grocery list today and have its *extra* help for your next wash.

Fels & Co., Philadelphia



FELS-NAPTHA

THE GOLDEN BAR WITH THE CLEAN NAPTHA ODOR

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Like those of most French agricultural villages, the limits of Colombier were definite. No straggling row of cottages of increasing degrees of squalor stretched along the road at either end. The lonely graveled road became suddenly a cobbled street between substantial houses. The cobblestones, widening at the marketplace, bisected the village and became once more a graveled road when the two rows of houses, whitewashed and green-shuttered, abruptly ceased to border them. For it is the pleasure of French farmers daily to walk many useless miles to and from their fields in order to spend their nights in their native village.

Elf paused at the entrance of the village, uncertain whether the first house or the marketplace offered the best opportunities for his marauding instincts. He approached a broken window and pulled aside the white curtains which hung as neatly as if no German shell had wrecked the rooms above. He saw a neat, uncomfortable sitting-room, almost, he thought, unscathed—until, in one corner, he noticed a heap of bricks and tiles which had crushed through the flimsy ceiling. An imitation plant of some weird species, beloved of the bourgeois, unknown to the botanist, stood on a table in a brass bowl. A picture of the Christ hung crooked on the wall. Opposite to it, encircled by a huge wreath of imitation palm, a cheap enlargement of a photograph of a young French soldier rose superior to the golden monument to bad taste that framed it. Printed in black letters on a white ribbon, which fell from the wreath, were the words:

"Édouard, mon fils bien aimé. Mort pour la Patrie le 22 décembre 1917"

Elf moved toward the door and, as he tried to open it, glanced over his shoulder. His mouth, dry with terror, fell open, and he gasped with a quick audible intake of breath. Toward him, walking cautiously and peering from side to side into the bared secrets of the houses, came a German, his rifle at the trail.

Paralyzed, Elf watched him coming nearer. The heavy helmet added horrifying unreality to a figure which stood for War personified. That clumsy headpiece, with none of the foppishness of the French or the rakishness of the British or American, was heavy, ugly, unimaginative and inartistic.

There are moments when the feeling of fear is so overwhelming that the mind seems incapable of absorbing the whole and concentrates solely on a part—a small detail—of the danger that threatens one. To Elf the brutal lines of the German helmet obliterated the rest of the universe. No impression was made on his mind by the gaping mouth in the unshaven face, the badly cut tunic of sage green, the pointed bulging pockets, the shapeless black leggings like grotesque cylinders of a man of metal.

Gemeiner Schmidt, also bent on predatory errands of his own, stepped cautiously. He was *"nur ein Gemeiner"*—only a common soldier; but he may have been just as innocent of the fault, which the civilian significance of the word implies, as Private Dyer was deprived of all privacy. It is better to give him the benefit of the doubt; for he died before he had time to make his peace with God or purloin forgotten trifles.

Firing from the hip, not wholly conscious of his act, Elf shot Gemeiner Schmidt through the heart. The German was still swaying, widespread fingers, cramped into claws, clutching at his breast, when Elf felt himself jerked into the house. The door slammed, and trembling, he found himself looking into dark eyes blazing with excitement.

She was a short, dark Frenchwoman. Pale-faced and stout, she was neatly dressed in the voluminous black silks of the respectable bourgeoisie. There were millions of her type in France, but perhaps none of them had gazed at anyone with the excited adoration with which this woman looked on Elf. His obvious terror, if she noticed it, she excused. The hatred which she bore the slayers of her son still burned like a furnace blast in her breast. And now,—she said it in all humility,—*Dieu soit merci*, she knew that Edouard, *fils bien aimé*, had been avenged. With her own eyes,—that even that should have been granted her!—with her own eyes to have seen the death of the *"abruti"* who perhaps—who knows?—had killed her well-beloved son Édouard. This boy, a boy of her son's age, had been the avenger. Nothing was too much to do for this chosen weapon of a just if cruel Deity.

Volubly she whispered to Elf in a language for which he had the unutterable contempt of the ignorant. She dragged him through a narrow passage to a back kitchen littered with broken bricks, tiles and rafters. One spot, a yard square, had been swept clean. Still whispering, looking at him with eyes glowing with unnatural brilliance in which showed excited gratitude for a gift as magnificent as it was unexpected, she stooped to lift a trapdoor. With gestures she indicated his only method of escape. He descended the steep, ladderlike steps, heard the trapdoor close, and the noise of broken masonry being piled on top of it.

Elf found himself in a long, low, dimly lighted cellar which had evidently served as dwelling and shelter. The single window was barred and protected by close-meshed metal gauze. On a table a spent candle had dripped waxen stalactites down the neck of a wine-bottle. There was a loaf of stale gray bread and, near it, a long and mildewed sausage. In the half dark he distinguished the opulent shapes of barrels of wine. He was almost inclined to pronounce that it was a little bit of "awlright," when he heard the sound of hurrying footsteps and a shout. He ran to the window, but found that it gave on a bricked-in space over which an iron grating lay. In an agony of suspense he stood by the window—seeing nothing and trying to picture events by the sounds which came through this grating.

IN reply to the shout, footsteps trampled the débris. Elf heard agitated voices and footsteps—this time receding. A rifle-butt hammered the door: *"Aufmachen . . . . . Militär!"* With a crash, the door fell from lock and hinges; overhead—sounds of heavy boots. Beads of perspiration wet Elf's forehead as he realized that the Germans were searching the house. "I gottah get aht of 'ere," he whispered, licking dry lips with dryer tongue as his frightened eyes roved round the cellar. Suddenly he heard a guttural "Ha!"—triumphant, cruel—a sound which might have heralded a Roman holiday. More men were joining the group outside; the house no longer shook under the heavy strides of the search-party. A brief period of absolute silence was broken by a voice, rasping, staccato, sibilant, impatient and bullying. If only he could understand! Elf wiped his forehead on the back of a grimy wrist. The voice continued. If one could hack one's sentences into pieces, one would talk like this unseen speaker. He seemed to be asking questions; and yet no one seemed to answer him, although occasionally Elf caught the sound of another man's voice. It was low and indistinct, almost like another language. Again there was silence. Even to Elf, seeing nothing of the actors in this drama, the silence was ominous, pregnant with tragedy. Then, clear, triumphant, yet challenging—vibrating with pride and tinged with contempt at the close, in a woman's voice came the words which saved Elf Dyer:

"Oui, c'est moi qui l'ai tué!"

"It is I who killed him!" . . . . Once more for a fraction of a minute the silence of the grave. Then short, sharp commands, the tramp of marching men. Again silence; the rattle of rifle-bolts and the deafening volley of the firing-squad.

SHOW GOAT

(Continued from page 45)

ignoring the interruptions, "I think a benefit performance given at the club-house should have some musical numbers, and certainly recitations and dances by our talented children. My daughter Doris is a wonderful toe-dancer—"

"In a murder mystery!" howls Hunter, losing all control.

"Why not?" I shrugs. "It'd explain the murder much more logically than that hoop-là about the ruby stolen from the Buddha."

"Why should we have a murder in the play at all?" demands Mrs. Fennell. "Is it necessary?"

"But, madam," points out Tremaine, "you must have a murder in a murder mystery."

"Not at all," comes back the old gal. "I've been making cottage puddings for years without cottages."

"And mighty good puddings they are too," says I. "Well, that apparently lets me out. You certainly don't need a detective in the cast if the murder's to be eliminated for a toe-dance."

"We're not eliminating the murder," snaps Hunter. "The play stands as it is, and those who don't care to participate in it may withdraw."

Mrs. Fennell and a handful of others take him at his word and walk out of the room in various degrees of dudgeon.

"This opera is surely building up a lot of good will for corduroy pants and imported delicatessen," I remarks to Breeze.

"Wait till they see me Booth it," says he.

"Boot it, you mean," says I.

THE Murgatroyds and the Fennells have too much influence at the club to be ignored and changes have to be made in "The Golf Club Assassin" to salve 'em. Zoë's given an especially fattened female part in Hunter's hunk of prime camembert, and the first act's opened up to let in some songs and dances that have about as much business there as a wet dog has in a dish of cream-puffs.

I don't withdraw from the cast as I'd threatened. I've got no more of a yen for acting than I have for doing tat-work, but the fun promises to be too good to miss. As far as my part goes, it seems easy enough to squat in a chair and fire questions at folks, such as:

"Where were you at nine-fifteen?"

"Right here."

"Right here, eh? What were you doing?"

"I think I was—"

"I don't care what you think. What were you doing?"

"You'd better quit questioning me. I can't talk without thinking. I'm no detective."

That'll give you an idea of my lines as well as a slant on the type of comedy relief Hunter had stolen and tucked away in his script. There isn't a titter in a ton of it.

Once the rehearsals get under way, drastic alterations are made in Larry's brain baby. It's finally been brought home to him that *Lionel Montrose's* twin brother from India can't just be found dead on a strange golf-course without any reason given for his being there, and the play's shifted around to permit

"it is natural for me . . a skin specialist . . to be an advocate of yeast". . .

AT the famous Hospital of St. Louis, in Paris, is Dr. Paul Gastou. A brilliant dermatologist, honored by medical societies throughout the world. What he says is a reflection of the highest opinion in his field.

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Here is the easy way to vigor and health—clear-skinned, abundant, fresh—which world-famous doctors advocate. Start today to discover what Fleischmann's Yeast will do for *you!*



DR. PAUL GASTOU OF PARIS

Well-known dermatologist; Chief of the General Laboratory of the Hospitals of the Right Bank of the Seine; former Chief of Clinic of the Faculty of Medicine of Paris. He has performed important medical missions for his government in Serria, Algeria, Western Africa and the Soudan. He says:

"That great skin specialist, Brocq, proved the value of yeast in skin troubles. So, it is natural for me to be an advocate of yeast. Yeast cleanses the intestine, checks the poisons. It is useful alike for the girl who wants to avoid pimples and for the man with an overworked digestive system."

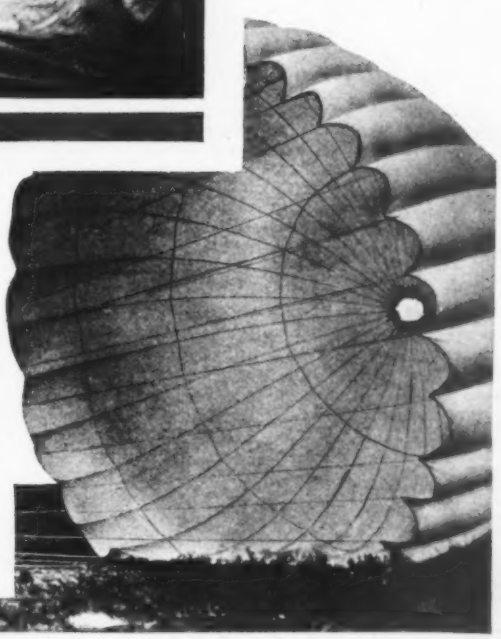
"Long hours in a plane . . . a sluggish system . . . complexion troubles set in"

"I AM TRAINING for an endurance flight," writes Edna Campbell Ferguson of Oceanside, Long Island. "Long hours in a plane made my system sluggish. Complexion troubles set in . . . The wife of a doctor friend suggested Fleischmann's Yeast. It corrected my sluggishness and cleared my skin."





(At left) *Miss Ferguson as she touched the ground after parachute jump*





(*Left*)

"I LEARNED TO SWIM when I was eight," writes Frank E. Wilk of Cleveland. "Later I took up football, baseball and boxing. During my athletic training I broke out with pimples and painful boils. My trainer, who has had a lifetime of experience, gave me Fleischmann's Yeast. I was soon completely rid of both pimples and boils."

(*Right*)

EAT 3 CAKES DAILY of Fleischmann's Yeast, plain or in water, cold or as hot as you can drink pleasantly. You can get it at grocers, restaurants and soda fountains. For free booklet write Health Research Dept. M-68, The Fleischmann Company, 701 Washington St., New York.



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Virgil to appear in the second act and make his own explanation. Tremaine, of course, is to be both brothers—*Lionel* in plus-fours, *Virgil* in a British uniform.

As a result of this and other revisions, audience interest, if any, is no longer in the identity of the murderer as much as it is in which of the two brothers has been croaked. That goes for audience interest. The audience hope will probably be that both of 'em have been done in.

"The changes," Dion tells me apologetically, "will cut down your part some, but—"

"That's all right with this tragedian," I assures him. "My only regret is that *Mrs. Montrose* didn't have triplets."

"I trust," says Mrs. Fennell, "that my daughter Doris' dances are in no way affected."

"Not at all," returns Tremaine hastily. "In fact, I'm centering the entire entertainment at the party around her."

"I like that," snaps Zoë Murgatroyd. "When did a little snip teetering on her toes get to be—"

"Now, now, ladies!" I cuts in soothingly. "You both can have all the time on the stage you want. Even if I have to sacrifice my entire part and leave the murder mystery unsolved—"

"Talking about mysteries," interrupts Mrs. Fennell, with a tilt of a spare chin, "you might look into this one some day: How can a girl who was eighteen in 1900 be thirty-two in 1929?" And with a venomous glare toward Zoë, she beats it away.

"You're coming along nicely in your lines and business, Miss Murgatroyd," says Dion in a noble effort to unruffle the gal's ruffled feathers, but it's not his big day as a salve-spreader.

"Thanks," she returns, kind of snippy, "but I'd come along much faster if you gave me only one-tenth the personal attention you give that French Mrs. Emerson."

FOR a fact, Tremaine has been playing Chérie heavy in and out of rehearsals. While it's true that she has the toughest *femme* rôle in the cast, there's a note in his work with her that strikes me as a bit more personal and a trifle less professional than the rules of the game call for. Their big scene together in the first act, however, is probably what first started the tabbies around the club to meowing.

In this spasm Chérie's discovered alone in the dining-room arranging flowers for a party she's throwing. Tremaine enters somewhat stimulated with mountain dew. There follows a lot of palaver about love, the right to live as one wishes, the utter uselessness of husbands and the rest of the hooey that distinguishes an English drawing-room comedy from a bad stretch of turnpike in eastern Oklahoma.

Chérie sort of leads the bozo on, but when he makes a pass at her and dives into a clinch, she suddenly remembers she's a lady and puts up a scrap. She's about all in from the struggle and getting herself into a high state of hysterics and histrionics, when who should enter the room, for a novel twist, but her husband! He lays Tremaine like linoleum with a smack on the jaw, crushes Chérie against the cigars in his vest and cries:

"If I ever catch you within ten feet of my wife again, I'll kill you as I would a snake."

Of course everything Dion says and does is in the script, but there's a velvet in his voice and an ardor in his approaches that never would have been there had Miss Murgatroyd or Mrs. Fennell been playing opposite. Everybody in the company seems to notice it but Breeze.

At any rate, it's not until Chérie and Tremaine begin holding private rehearsals in the afternoon that he lets out a peep.

"What's the idea?" he growls. "Can't you and that ham do your work with the rest of us?"

"*Mais non*," says she. "The part the which I play it is *très difficile*. It is—"

"It's no more *difficile* than mine," cuts in Emerson, "and I've got that down so pat I could stop the show with it tonight. You just stay away from that chorus boy. Understand?"

"Is it that it is that you are jealous?" smiles Chérie.

"It is not that that it is," comes back Breeze. "What it is is that I don't want you to get talked about. Don't forget that there are a flock of frills around here that are sore at you to begin with for grabbing off that *Palmer* part."

"Your husband's right," says I. "There are dames in this deadfall that'd start a scandal about their mother if they found her talking with the letter-carrier."

"What for I care?" demands Chérie. "Monsieur Tremaine, he say I could be the great actress, and he wish to help me. *Pourquoi pas?*"

NEVERTHELESS she sees less of Dion, who's kept much too busy with the rest of the slewfoots in the cast to give anybody any individual attention. And believe me, this job of his is no bed of pinks and posies. I don't know what he's getting for the chore, but whatever it is, he's being grossly underpaid.

Between telling fat-heads over and over and over again how to walk into a room without tripping on the furniture, arguing with Zoë Murgatroyd over matters of accent and voice-pitch, and constantly assuring Mrs. Fennell that her daughter's toe-dance was the thing nearest his heart, Tremaine's worn to a thin frazzle in the three weeks of preparation.

"Glad it's over?" I asks him after the dress rehearsal. The boy's practically in a state of collapse.

"Yes," says he, "but it's not your fault. You and Mrs. Emerson caused me very little annoyance. I think you'll both give outstanding performances tomorrow night."

"Me!" I exclaims. "Hell, I don't know any more about acting than a planked shad does about bee-culture."

"Perhaps even less," returns the old flatterer, "but you know that you don't know, which is all to the good. Mrs. Emerson's beauty and vivacity should see her through regardless of lines and business. Your wife, of course, has but a few—"

"How about Emerson himself?" I interrupts.

"He's a great friend of yours, isn't he?" inquires Dion, with narrowed eyes and tightened lips.

"Yes," I admits, "but you may speak freely. Graveyards gossip more than I do."

"He's terrible," says Tremaine. "The worst ever. A know-it-all who knows nothing. It wouldn't surprise me the slightest if he should go to pieces and wreck the show."

"You seem to forget," I observes, "that he knocked 'em out of their seats in Terre Haute—"

"Probably toward the exits," says Dion.

THERE'S a big turn-out at Bayview the next night to see a lot of saps who can't act in a piece that can't be acted. The lounge has been fixed up like a regular theater with scenery, an orchestra and spotlights, as well as a bunch of coughers in the audience to complete the illusion.

For some reason I'm not at all nervous, but the rest of the boys and girls back-stage act like the graduating class of St. Vitus about to receive their diplomas. Even Emerson's standing in his bare feet on a hot stove.

"Why so fidgety?" I asks. "They can't arrest you for what you're about to do."

"Fidgety, nothing!" growls Breeze. "That's temperament. All good actors suffer from temperament on opening nights."

"Oh, I'm glad to hear that!" exclaims Mrs. Fennell, all her chins aquiver. "I feel so temperamental."

"Madam," says Emerson coldly, "all good actors are temperamental, but it doesn't follow that all temperamental people are good actors."

"Mother," chimes in Doris Fennell, "when do I go out and dance?"

"Right after the murder, little one," I tells her. "That will make two of 'em in a row."

"I expect quite a few floral offerings this evening," announces Zoë Murgatroyd at this juncture. "Please remember they are for me." And she glances meaningly toward Mrs. Fennell.

"Don't worry, dearie," says Old Avoirdupois. "I get my vegetables at the market."

"Now, now!" interposes Hunter. "I know we're all on edge, but there must be kindly coöperation if we're to have a success."

"Sure," I mutters to the Frau. "That's all we need—that, a few actors and a play. . . . . I think I'll go out and sit with the audience when I'm not doing my stuff."

"What for?" she frowns.

"To practice my new profession," says I. "I'll see if I can detect any acting on the stage."

"There'll be more of it when you're off than when you're on," predicts the little woman.

There's no time for further palaver. The orchestra having finished the overture, Dan Tevis, president of Bayview, steps out in front and tells the customers all about the charity the crime's being committed for. As is usual in such benefits, I figure that when the expenses are deducted, the charity will be able to add another two-cent stamp to its postage supply.

The curtain rises on a couple of waiters fussing around the table in the dining-room set and discussing the latest gossip about *Lionel Montrose* and the frills that have flopped for him—the first of Larry's novel twists. We're all stacked in the wings listening. The boys do their bits with all the ease and *sang-froid* of a bridegroom with a busted garter, and finally exit with a sigh of relief that must have been heard by deaf old Mrs. Zilch in Row R.

"Now, Chérie," whispers Tremaine, patting her gently on the back. "Take it easy, dear."

"Chérie!" scowls Emerson. "Dear! How the hell does that hired hand get that way? I'll knock his—"

"Forget it!" I snaps. "He's just being gentle with her to calm her down. —Listen to that!"

IT'S a great hand Chérie gets, and she has it coming to her purely on the flash she makes. The gal, who's an eyeful under any system of accounting, has diked herself out in a jag of rags that sets her out like a flower-garden on a rainbow.

For a couple of minutes she moves gracefully about the table arranging this and those. Then Zoë Murgatroyd enters with a flourish and takes a stance in mid-stage that strikes me as being more in keeping with the *Spirit of Medicinal Wine* than with the part she's playing. In the conversation between the two frills more gossip about *Lionel's* planted, and the impression left that both of the dolls are that way about the club Casanova.

Exit Zoë, enter Tremaine. He has the slight tilt of one who has dallied with the milk of the wild moose, but he talks clearly enough when he steps on the sentimental gas. Chérie comes right back at him snappy, and "The Golf Club Assassin" is off to a galloping start.

"He's rotten," grumbles Breeze. "I should have taken that part myself. I'd have made it sing."

VOTED THE MOST BEAUTIFUL WOMAN IN THE ARTS . . .

by John Barrymore

Cornelius Vanderbilt, Jr.

F. Scott Fitzgerald



MISS JULIA EVANS, *of St. Louis, Missouri, chosen from among Woodbury beauties of forty-eight States as the most beautiful woman in the arts. She is photographed here with the famous Benda masks.*

"BEWILDERING"—the judges found their task when it came to choosing the most beautiful woman in the arts among users of Woodbury's Facial Soap.

Every type, every locality, seemed to be represented. There was a slim little golden-haired dancer from California. There was a curly-haired art student from Kansas City—a tall young sculptress from Connecticut—and out of San Antonio, Texas, came the lovely laughing face of a singer of Spanish folk songs.

From hundreds of entrants the judges chose Miss Julia Evans, a young dramatic student of St. Louis.

★

Her beauty is very distinguished, very individual:—long lovely lines that give her most unconscious attitudes a wonderful plastic grace; a slightly husky contralto voice full of haunting undertones and overtones; a face as beautifully modeled as a statue's, but warm with color and life.

She is a member of "The Players" of St. Louis and has played in various amateur productions. She is "serious" about the stage and hopes to act professionally some day.

When asked about her lovely skin—fair, warm in color, as if the sun had given it just a hint of the gold that is in her hair and in her voice—Miss Evans said that she had used Woodbury's for years, and that she found it matchless for keeping her skin in good condition.

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John Barrymore



Cornelius Vanderbilt, Jr.



F. Scott Fitzgerald

"Maybe," says I, "but you'd better get ready to go out and hum the part you've got. They're all set for the clinch."

Dion's a good deal rougher than he ever was at rehearsals. He leaps at Chérie for a half-nelson hold, wrestles around with her in the most approved movie manner, and in the excitement tears a shoulder strap from her dress. That's Emerson's cue.

I hears a muttered growl, and Breeze dashes by me onto the stage, but his sense of direction is not so hot. His foot gets entangled in a chair at the head of the table, and seeking to save himself from a fall, he grabs onto the edge of the tablecloth. Down crashes the old side-kick, bringing with him a varied assortment of vases, plates, silverware and napery. The audience, not having yet seen enough of the show to know what it's all about, figures this for a high comedy touch and howls with delight.

Emerson finally disentangles himself from the mess of set-ups and gets to his feet. He's pale and shaken, and there's a dazed look in his eyes.

"What is the meaning of this, Montrose?" prompts Hunter hoarsely from the wings. There's no response from Breeze. Then, suddenly, words fairly blurt from him.

"I will buy with you, sell with you, walk with you, talk with you and so following; but I will not eat with you, drink with you, nor pray with you. What news on the Rialto? Who is he comes here?"

The poor sap! Between jealous anger, stage fright and the tumble he'd taken, Emerson'd completely lost his lines from "The Assassin," but out of the dim and distant past there'd come to him a speech of *Shylock's* he'd memorized as a kid for the high-school "Merchant of Venice!"

"I love your wife," ad libs Dion, in an effort to bring Breeze around, and again falls into a clinch with Chérie. "What are you going to do about it?"

Bam! Emerson's right shoots flush into Tremaine's pan, and there's no pull-back stage-stuff in the wallop, either. Dion sways on his dogs for a moment with wide-open, surprised eyes and crumples to the floor. Only then does Breeze recall something of his lines, but only something.

"You dirty dog!" he snarls. "If I ever see my feet within five wives of you, I'll snake you as I would a kill!" And the curtain on Act I falls like the quality of mercy.

"YOU certainly goomed the works," I remarks to Emerson, when he finds his way backstage.

"What do you mean—goomed?" he comes back. "I'm supposed to be a guy in a jealous rage in this show, aint I? Well, don't a guy in a jealous rage talk wild and act cuckoo? That's what I did just to be realistic—"

"A bit too realistic," grumbles Tremaine, rubbing his lamp with a wet wipe. "My eye feels frightfully sore."

It should. There's a deep cut under the right optic, and even as I looks, the swelling about it grows apace. Soon the eye's closed with a tapestry of an ingenious blue-and-green pattern. Dion asks for a mirror.

"Oh, my God!" he gasps, after a peek. "I can't go out for the next act."

"Sure you can," says Hunter. "Nobody'll notice it, and even if they do they'll regard it as a real deft Belasco touch."

"Just so much more realism," adds Breeze, who's himself again.

"But you don't understand," almost wails Tremaine. "I'm *Virgil* in the second act. Twin brothers may look alike, but they'd hardly acquire black eyes at the same time."

Nobody'd thought of that, but everybody thinks plenty and fast now. However, we're up against a stone wall. Dion absolutely refuses to go on in the condition he's in, and the play's been changed so since it was originally written that there isn't any play without *Lionel's* twin brother.

"It's no use," declares Dion. "I will not make a laughingstock of myself. I have a professional reputation to maintain."

"What'll we do?" moans Larry.

"Call the show off," returns Tremaine; and that's what we do. Or rather we have Dan Tevis do it for us.

"I regret to announce," I hears the club president say from the front of the curtain, "that owing to the illness of one of the principals, it will be impossible to continue with 'The Golf Club Assassin' this evening. However, we have a treat in store for us. Miss Doris Fennell has consented to give us a toe-dance recital. Her first number will be 'The Awakening of Spring.'"

"It's fortunate," remarks Mrs. Fennell, "that we are able, after all, to present the best part of Mr. Hunter's play."

"You certainly stopped this show," says I to Emerson.

"I always stop 'em," comes back Breeze. And he seems to be pleased with himself.

MEHMET THE RED

(Continued from page 59)

a monkey and a flower. . . . . Ah—bless them not the Lord Allah!"

"It seems, on the contrary," smiled the Turkoman, "that the Lord Allah has most singularly blessed the Hindus of Samarkand—blessed them with golden riches and the amazing beauty of black-haired women."

"There is a fidget in my sword-arm," came Mehmet's casual remark, "which tells me I shall help myself to my fair share of both."

He gave a broad, shameless wink. The stranger did likewise—then suddenly he exclaimed:

"I like you!"

"You do?"

"Enormously! By the crimson pig's bristles," he cried, and he shot forth his long arms and clasped Mehmet to his broad flat chest, "you are a man after my own heart! A fighter of fights! A kisser of kisses!"

"Nowhere—east, south, north, west—lives there my equal in either," said Mehmet negligently.

"Except myself!" Again the other embraced him—exclaimed again: "I like you—enormously! Therefore, here,"—slipping a ring from his finger and giving it to Mehmet,—"a token from me to you. Ah,"—he lowered his voice,—"it will help you in your quest, my friend."

Mehmet looked at the jewel: a broad silver band curiously and intricately engraved and set with a star-sapphire.

"What is it?" he asked.

"An *'Open Sesame'* to the dwellings and treasure-boxes of the Hindus. The ring of the Grand Khan's Grand Vizier. At least,"—the Turkoman coughed, rather guiltily,—"I doubt that the Grand Khan's Grand Vizier would be able to tell the difference." Once more he coughed. "I used it—"

"Profitably?"

"Very." The Turkoman slapped his waist-shawl so that the gold coins there sang a merry tune. "I am now on my way to Bokhara to spend the money."

"A woman there waiting for you?"

"Three women—young, supple, delightful."

"May Allah send you four more! Seven is a lucky number." Mehmet salaamed. "Thanks for the ring," he added, then turned and went on his way.

AN hour later Mehmet reached the quarter of the Hindus, where beyond the walls of Samarkand, it stretched its motley congeries of houses and bazaars between a framing of densely wooded hills.

Very much like the Moslem town, it was filled with a milling throng. People haggled, jested, laughed, swapped spiced gossip. But there was a difference. For the Moslems were here by red right of conquest, the Hindus by sufferance. Thus, where the Moslems were truculent and aggressive, the Hindus were submissive and supine. Where the Moslems yelled, the Hindus purred. Where the Moslems relied on the sword, the Hindus relied on the yardstick. And when, from time to time, the Moslems squeezed, mulcted, oppressed the Hindus, the latter shrugged their shoulders, permitted—indeed, what else could they do since they were in such helpless minority?—the squeezing, mulcting, oppressing, certain that presently, with their racial resilience and bitter racial patience, they would make up their losses a hundredfold, were they losses in money or in dignity.

But always theirs the soft word that turneth away wrath; always, beneath their mildness, theirs a stiff-necked, rather sardonic pride; and so tonight in the house of the *aksakal* or leader of the community, where earnest bearded men, the pick of the Hindus in riches and civic worth and Vedic learning, were gathered over coffee and pipes, Chandra Dwaj, the Brahmin priest, speaking about the Moslems, the masters, remarked:

"Masters—for how long? Barbarians they are! Cannibals of the Holy Cow! Some day Doorga, the Great Mother, the Six-Armed Reverence, will send an earthquake and destroy them utterly! But we are the thrice-born—we are Brahm's Chosen—we survive."

"At times it is costly to survive," advanced Krishna Ghose, the banker. "The taxes we must pay, the bribes—"

"Pah," laughed the *aksakal*, "there is other bran to be picked by the little brown hen!"

"Maybe so," grumbled Haridas the tailor. "But not often can I pick up such gorgeous Persian brocade as I had to cut into a burnoose for that bullying Turkoman."

"May his beard be disgraced! May the gods cause him to be reborn as a beetle!" sighed Chattrapati, the fruiterer. "Me he robbed, and you, and many others. But what could we do? He flashed the Grand Vizier's signet ring—in proof of the Grand Vizier's trust."

"It is wise to bow to the monkey who is in power," counseled the priest, while Pratap Singh the goldsmith said that he, personally, had his doubts about the ring, that it had seemed too new, too shiny.

"A forgery, you think?"

"I am not sure. But I suspect."

"Why did you not warn us?" demanded Sri Madho the grocer, a man younger, therefore less patient, than the others. "We might have gone to the Grand Vizier—can still do it."

But the goldsmith interrupted that this would be useless, explaining that the Grand Vizier was hedged in by slaves and courtiers—and how could one reach his ear without gilding many crooked fingers? It would cost more to find out if the ring was genuine than not to find out; and if the ring should be genuine after all, it would mean the bastinado and an enormous fine.

"Cheaper to throw a bone to the jackal," quoted the priest, "than to open your stable to the lion."

At this moment, suddenly, the door was pushed open, and on the threshold, having chosen the house at random, stood Mehmet, naked blade in his right hand.

"Here am I!" he announced in a bullying kind of trumpet, and he stood up on his toes to make himself look the taller.



SHOOTS a 76 . . . *but can't get in a club*

IT sounds incredible until you know the facts as they know them in San Francisco.

Aside from his deadly ability at golf, he possessed a natural charm that made him most engaging to both men and women. Yet no one was willing to propose him for club membership, for he had one fault that simply could not be excused. He, himself, didn't realize what it was—and no one had the courage to tell him.

Only those blind to facts assume they never have halitosis (unpleasant breath). Actually 1 out of 3 offends, occasionally or habitually, surveys show. This is due to the fact that everyday conditions such as pyorrhea, defective teeth, fermenting food particles between teeth, and minor infections of the nose and throat cause it.

Why offend others, when you can keep your breath beyond suspicion by using full strength Listerine three times a day, as a mouth wash?

Being an active germicide,* it attacks the cause of odors and then, being a powerful deodorant, destroys the odors themselves. Keep a bottle handy wherever you are. Lambert Pharmacal Company, St. Louis, Mo., U. S. A.

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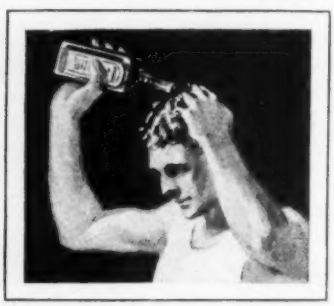
LISTERINE

THE SAFE ANTISEPTIC



. . . *honestly,*
you'd think men
wanted to be bald!

This happy-go-lucky habit of sloshing water on the hair to make it lie down. Bad for the hair, and most men know it, but they go on until it's too late to do anything but shop for a toupee.



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Wet the hair with Wildroot Hair Tonic. Massage vigorously . . . then comb while wet. No dandruff . . . no itching . . . no unnatural dryness. Keeps your scalp healthy . . . invigorates the hair roots. Get this safe reliable Hair Tonic at any druggist, barber shop or department store. It is guaranteed. Accept no substitute. When you shampoo always use Wildroot Taroleum Shampoo. After a shampoo apply Wildroot Hair Tonic.

WILDROOT

Hair Tonic . . . Taroleum Shampoo



If the men were nervous, they did not show it. They were used to roistering, blustering Moslems. So they sighed and sat quiet—all but the *aksakal,* who rose and said:

"God's peace on you—ah—I did not catch your name."

"The splendid name I have for myself is Mehmet the Red. Red because of my beard—and because of the blood I have spilled. Blood of Moslems and Christians and Hindus. Chiefly Hindus," he added, smiling wolfishly at the other—who smiled mildly and went on:

"May I ask you *why* you are here?"

"By right of the sword. Too,"—stretching out his left thumb, on which silver twinkled,—"by right of this!"

"Hai-yai-yai!" cried the grocer. "Here is this accursed ring again!" while the *aksakal* whispered, "Hush, little brother!" and turned once more to the stranger. "And what do you wish, O Mehmet the Red?"

"Food," came the prompt reply. "Coined gold—though jewels will do. And a look at your women—unveiled, preferably."

"Food will be yours. Also a purse of gold. And when it comes to women,"—as several, attracted by the commotion, crowded into the front room from the inner apartment,—"it is not our custom to veil their faces. Look at them to your heart's content."

MEHMET was puzzled. He had expected to have his way. But without even the faintest edge of a fight? Without anybody resenting his insults and striking a blow? It was a new experience, a thing beyond his naïve comprehension. Somehow it took the fun out of the adventure, the worth, the keen thrill—

"If you would care to argue the point—" he began.

"How can we?" The *aksakal* smiled thinly. "You have the Grand Vizier's signet ring."

"I am willing to forget it—if any one of you would like to cross blades with me."

"No, no!"

"Just the tiniest bit of a row—the tiniest bit of blood-letting," urged Mehmet.

"We are a peaceful folk."

"To the Devil with peace!" Mehmet addressed the company at large: "Come on! Three of you—or four, or seven—the whole lot against me! One at a time or all at once! What do you say?"

"No, no!" repeated the *aksakal.* "We are a peaceful folk."

"Cowards!" yelled Mehmet in contempt.

"Wise, we call ourselves. Wise because we are peaceful—perhaps because we are, as you say, cowards." He pointed to the guest-chamber. "Enter, O neighbor of God," he invited hospitably.

Mehmet stared at him, stared at the others—the quiet, smiling men. He clenched his fists. Rage surged through him. But it was not in his simple crude code to strike one who did not resist. So he had to be satisfied with a volley of salty abuse, winding up:

"Wah—O warts on the nose of creation—may the Prophet Mohammed take the stench of your cowardice from your souls and put it into your mustaches to the discomfort of your nostrils!"

Then, since there was nothing else he could do, and since, moreover, he was as hungry as a wolf, he clicked his sword back into the scabbard and entered the guest-room, where he ate copiously—so copiously that presently some of his jovial good-humor returned; and later on, surrounded by some of his hosts, he sat there, happy enough, entertaining them far into the night with tales about his prowess and his motley adventures.

And some of the tales were true. Some were gorgeous and impudent lies. But he preceded each with a pious:

"May Allah not grant me salvation if my tongue slips on the path of veracity!"

He borrowed somebody's pipe, filled it liberally with somebody else's tobacco, spoke grandiosely:

"It is known to all the world that it was I who sat on top of the heap when courage was given away! Let me tell you about the time when I battled the copper-faced Manchu giant, and how—"

"Listen!" a clear voice cut in. "Have you ever heard that the drum which booms most loudly is filled with wind?"

With a roar he was up on his feet. His hand reached for sword-hilt—dropped away when he saw the speaker. For it was Padmavati, the *aksakal's* daughter, and you might have sought throughout High Tartary for a handsomer maid and not found her.

He laughed.

"Had you been a man," he replied, "there would be now my blade across your throat. But you are a girl. By the Prophet—such a girl you are, with a nose like a flower and skin smooth as a trout's back!"

He walked up to her.

"Allah!" he continued; and often in the past had he used the same trick of speech with pleasant result, had used it only a short time earlier to the Turkoman woman. "Your locks are storm-dark as the parting of friends, and your smile bright as the noon when friends meet again. And as to your eyes—by my honor, the moon shines in them—though possibly it is your eyes which shine in the moon's glory." He dropped his voice a little. "If you would roam with me in the far woods, whisper the words, O crusher of hearts. And maybe I shall say yes—and maybe no."

Came mocking laughter from the people in the room, the younger men there; for more than one of them had spoken to Padmavati of love, had decently asked her hand in marriage. To one and all she had given a curt "No!" in answer; and here was this willful, haughty girl being humbled in her turn.

She blushed.

"I hate you!" she cried, and rushed out, while Mehmet turned back to the company and resumed the tale of his prowess:

"This Manchu giant of whom I spoke—seven foot tall, he was. But he kissed my hands and acknowledged me master before I got through with him. There was also a strong warrior from Bokhara—"

Far into the night. . . . .

SUCH was Mehmet's introduction to the Hindu quarter. He remained there day after day. Nor was he unwelcome. They gave him food, money, a small house—gave it gladly. For the next afternoon and the next, and again the next, Moslem ruffians appeared. They flashed identical rings—indeed, the jeweler who had forged them must have sold them wholesale—and demanded tribute "by token of the Grand Vizier's trust." And always Mehmet would receive them, would brazenly produce his own ring and exclaim threateningly:

"Away, O base-born pigs! It is I, I, *I* who is the Grand Vizier's friend! Away with you before I have you arrested and soundly beaten, O shameless thieving creatures!"

It is a moot point whether they believed the truth of his words. At all events they could not afford to put it to the proof; and so they decamped, discouraging others and leaving the Hindu quarter richer and more peaceful, while the men there were enthusiastic in praise of the stranger.

So were the women, though their praises were not for the same cause and were whispered rather than aloud. For Mehmet—let us admit it—had a way with the women as he had with the sword; and during the next week or so the woods that framed the quarter might have murmured many a secret of soft words and of kisses not quite so soft.

But Mehmet's heart was not in this busi-



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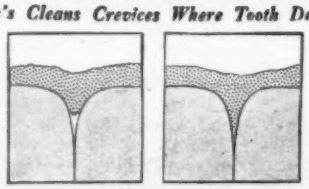
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If you have not yet become acquainted with Colgate's, may we send you a generous trial tube and an interesting booklet on the care of the teeth and mouth? Just mail the coupon.

How Colgate's Cleans Crevices Where Tooth Decay May Start

Greatly magnified picture of tiny tooth crevice. Note how ordinary, sluggish toothpaste (having high "surface-tension") fails to penetrate deep down where the causes of decay lurk.



This diagram shows how Colgate's active foam (having low "surface-tension") penetrates deep down into the crevice, cleansing it completely where the toothbrush cannot reach.

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ness of making love. If he kissed, he did it for two reasons. One was because of his self-respect—his duty, as he conceived it, toward his manhood. The second was because, ever since that first evening, he had been unable to forget Padmavati, had often spoken to her of his desire, and finding her always cold and unbending, thought that jealousy might turn the trick.

Perhaps, he imagined, if she saw him courting other women—the red-haired wife of the grocer, or the butcher's sister—

But he was wrong. Padmavati did not seem to care, and it made him unhappy. Real love—was it? At least he thought so. He would look at her and feel a yearning savage and sweet. Here, he said to himself, was his life's aim and happiness—and she so hard to him, like a rampart of stone; and why should that be, since he loved her?

Did she want marriage?

Yes, doubtless, marriage—for she was different from the lawless women he had known heretofore.

He turned the question over in his mind. Formerly it had been his boast that it was the single man who traveled pleasantly through the wonders of the broad world, the single man who was jaunty and free. Well,—and he sighed a little,—he would have to give up his freedom. For desire was through him like a flame, burning, hurting.

So the next time he met Padmavati, he said to her:

"Marry me!"

"No."

"Why not?"

"I do not love you."

"You will learn to love me. Other girls have in the past. Come with me, child. We shall find a Moslem priest to make us one—a Hindu priest if you prefer."

"Leave me alone! I do not love you," she repeated impatiently, turning to go.

But he stretched out a detaining hand.

"Let me tell you of the grand deeds I shall do for your sake."

"*Wah!*" she interrupted. "And were you the Grand Khan himself, in glory of great emeralds and fine silks, I would still reply: I do not love you!"

THUS always her words, chilly, slightly contemptuous, when he spoke to her of marriage: "I do not love you." The oftener she said it, the more grew his desire. It cut through him like a sword. Why, he loved her, wanted her—here was the sum-total of his reckoning—and she must love him. She must! Other girls had loved him. Many others. Why not Padmavati?

It was not only passion. It was also a blow to his self-esteem. Her refusal had made a breach in the tough wall of his emotional defenses. He must repair it, must bend his energies to that one end. But how? Should he go to her house at night, batter in the doors, carry her off by force?

He shook his head. Impossible! The Hindus were peaceful. But such an outrage not even they would permit.

Oh, why would she not love him?

And then, one day, he found out—found out, too, why she always said "No!" to the youths of her own race who asked for her hand.

All morning—for since he was steppe-bred, there were times when the streets and bazaars seemed to stifle him—he had been in the woods; was squatting by the edge of a pool, his rod and hair-line and feathers whipping the eddies where the speckled trout played. He had made a good catch and was about to stretch out for an hour's sleep, when sounds attracted his attention.

There was a faint rustling. A twig snapped. Then a voice:

"Heart of me! Dear, dear heart of me!"

He was curious, uneasy—seemed to recognize the voice; and noiselessly he crept toward the left. He reached the shelter of a large spruce tree—saw, in a clearing, a human figure.

No. Two human figures, in each other's arms. A man—and Padmavati. She kissed him—and again her voice, charged with high, driving tenderness:

"I love you so!"

"And I love you!" said the man.

He was tall, his yellow hair contrasting strangely with his darkly tanned face, dressed in rough leather garments, a crooked dagger strapped flat against the brawn of his arm, a silver crucifix on a chain around his throat. A Siberian, a Christian, Mehmet knew at once—belonging to one of the free bands that roved through the mountains and steppes, the forests and moors, trapping sable and ermine and snow-fox. Outcasts they were, because they were vagabonds and because they were Christians, mistrusted, despised by the Hindus as much as by the Moslems. And here was Padmavati the haughty, in the arms of one of them—and Mehmet felt his heart stop beating as though it had suddenly been plunged into ice.

BLACK rage dried his brain. He flexed his hairy arms. He was on the point of rising, of leaping at the man's throat. But he controlled himself, listened again. The stranger was asking Padmavati to run away with him and become his wife.

"No," she said.

"What else can we do?" he argued. "I am what I am—a Christian and a man of the wilderness. Your father will not permit us to wed properly, with a priest speaking the blessed words."

"I know, Grigori," she sighed.

"So, you see, we must run away."

"No, no. . . . . My father—I love him."

"More than you love me?" Grigori demanded jealously.

"Neither more nor less. But—oh, differently. He is old. I cannot break his heart."

"You are breaking mine."

"You are stronger than he—and younger. We have spoken of it before. We must wait."

"Until—"

"Yes. Until—may the Lord grant it be not for many years!—his soul finds paradise!"

Grigori shrugged his shoulders in ungracious resignation. Not long afterward he went up the hill, while she took the road back to the city.

Mehmet followed at a distance. A great turmoil gripped him, almost physically. An outcast! A Christian! She preferred an outcast, a Christian, to him—Mehmet the Red, Mehmet the Bold, Mehmet of the Sword!

Why, it must not be—he would not permit it.

He hurried, caught up with her. She tried to pass on without a word. But he stopped her.

"Listen to me, Padmavati!"

"Yes?"

"I have been thinking," he smiled, "—ah, —thinking of your slender red mouth of kisses."

"Have you no understanding at all, O great buffalo?" she cried angrily. "I have told you often—"

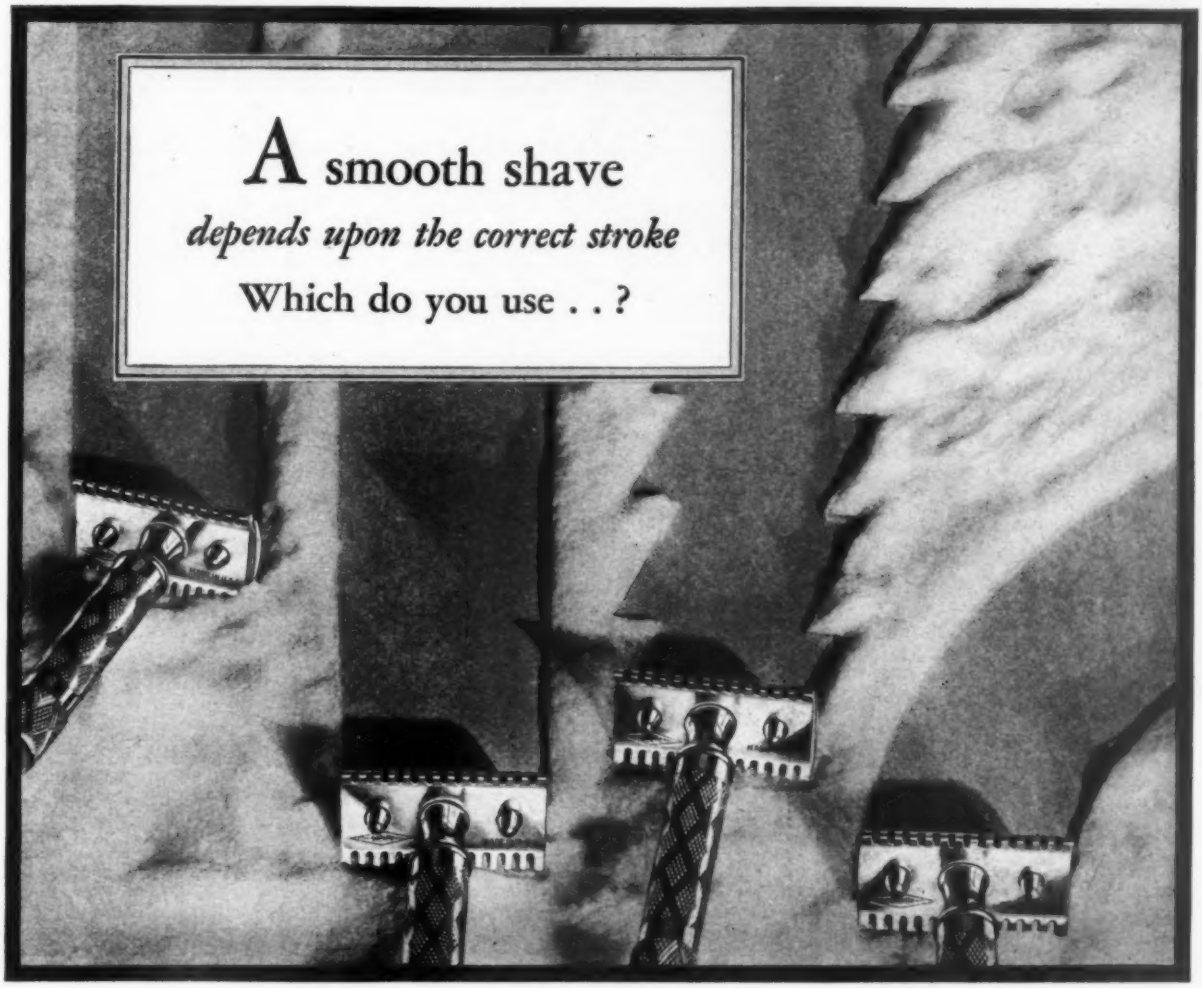
"That you do not love me. I remember. And—I believe."

"Then—what?"

"Passion," came his mocking answer, "mutual passion when a man and a girl love each other, is the sweetest thing in the world, the best thing. But I have always been the one to take the second best if the first best I cannot have."

"You mean—"

"My own passion—without yours. Your mouth—without your love." And when she turned to walk away, he grasped her wrist, pointing with his other hand to where a thicket of woods stretched dense and black. "Meet me here tonight," he said, "after



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your parents have gone to bed. A good place it will be for the two of us—with spruce boughs for our couch, and the wind for our coverlet, and the pines about us tall and strong and shutting out the world's ways for the span of an hour—"

"You are mad!" she exclaimed.

"Mad or not—my eyes are sharp, and my ears."

"You—*oh!*"

She guessed, feared what he was going to say, and he said it:

"I saw you awhile back, heard you—you and the Christian. Ah,"—trembling with jealousy,—"a cursed outcast!"

She flared up.

"I love him!"

"You will forget him after you have kissed me—once. Come tonight. Or else—"

"You will tell my father?"

"Yes."

"Please, please!" she begged. "My father is old and not very strong. It would hurt him to know."

"As it hurts me to know. But your kisses will heal the hurt. The woods tonight—or a word in your father's ear. You have the choice."

She did not reply.

"Choose!" he insisted.

A second passed, two, three. She stared at him. Then a queer smile curled her lips, and she spoke:

"I have chosen."

"What?" he demanded eagerly.

"Neither."

"Eh?"

"I shall not go to the woods with you; nor will you tell my father."

He was amazed. "Why not?"

"Because you love me!" And since she was clever, since she could read him like an open book and knew that vanity was his weakness, she added: "And because you are what you are—a gentleman, a man of honor."

"By Allah and by Allah," he exclaimed, "but you are right! *Ahee,*"—proudly,—"east, west, south, north, where is my equal when it comes to high honor and nobility of soul?"

"Nowhere!" came her demure rejoinder. "And, about my having to choose—"

"I was only jesting," he lied grandiosely.

He was silent. Then suddenly he laughed. It was a bellowing laugh; and this time it was Padmavati who was amazed.

"What is the matter?" she asked.

"The matter is that, had I any gratitude, I would be now on my knees to you. For here am I, as jaunty a creature as ever trod the earth—and I have escaped a dread danger to my freedom."

"Danger?" she echoed wonderingly.

"Danger of being tied to a girl's petticoats—your petticoats, O delight! Love you? Of course. But who knows how long love will last? I begged you to marry me. You refused—refused to clip my wings; and so should I not be thanking you?"

SHE gasped. For—was it not like a woman?—she felt just the least little bit nettled. But a second later she joined in his laughter and said:

"I know a way for you to prove your gratitude."

"How?"

"Help me."

"I shall do whatever you wish," was his gallant reply.

She suppressed a smile.

"Mehmet dear," she said, "you know what my father is like, and all my people. Kindly —but so narrow, so deep in the stony bitter grooves of ancient Hindu customs. Grigori is a Christian and a man of the wilderness. Accursed he is to them. But he is all the world to me—and who can help me except you? You"—again she suppressed a smile—"so wise, so brave, so strong."

"I am all you say. The fact of it is known throughout High Tartary. Thus, if Christian you want, Christian you shall have."

"But—you will not harm my father?"

"Not a hair on his head! Leave it to me," he went on magnificently. "In peace and war, in love and hate, did I ever begin aught—and not finish it? And as to these Hindus—*wah*—they shall dance as I pipe!"

THEY did indeed, though they liked neither the dancing nor the piping. For day by day Mehmet grew more and more the steel-rattling ruffian, grew less and less discreet in his love-making—until scandal invaded the Hindu quarter, jealousy, ugly suspicion; until a woman could hardly go to the hills to pick wild berries without her husband thinking the worst. Too, his greed for money was outrageous, so that finally the patience of the Hindus reached the breaking-point, and there were excited words when people gathered at market:

"Here is this Moslem bully making love to our women, gobbling our food, stealing our goods—"

"Aye! He is swaggering about in my grand yellow boots!"

"And my new cloak!"

"Last night he drank two bottles of my finest Persian wine!"

"He kissed my wife," complained Sri Madho, the grocer, "and she kissed him back!"

"You lie!" shrieked the woman thus, and justly, accused.

"I saw it!"

"You did not, O unclean low-caste!"

And a storm of marital recriminations, presently drowned in the banker's wail:

"He hugged my daughter!"

"Ah, the Moslem—the dirt-eating infidel!"

"Who, be pleased not to forget," interrupted the *aksakal,* "has the Grand Vizier's signet ring."

"The ring which, doubtless, is a forgery."

"But which protects us against greater robbers."

"A forgery just the same," insisted the grocer. "I shall go to the Grand Vizier—"

"And risk the bastinado and an enormous fine?"

"Better bastinado and fine than the indignities which Mehmet heaps upon our heads! This afternoon I shall talk to the Grand Vizier."

Padmavati heard. She warned Mehmet, who laughed, said, "Excellent, by the honor of my beard!"—and went at once to the Grand Vizier's palace. There a pot-bellied captain was mounting guard, and he out with his sword as the other drew near.

"Stop, dog!" he commanded.

Mehmet smiled.

"Speaking about friendship," he began, "and gold—"

"Whose?"

"Your friendship—because of my gold." A well-filled purse changed hands. "I have your friendship?"

"Absolutely. What can I do for you?"

Mehmet told him, and the soldier inclined his head.

"Consider it done. Only—a word of advice: sooner or later the Grand Vizier's spies will find out about the ring."

"The very thing which I fear!"

"You have enough money. Why do you not leave?"

"Because of a girl."

"Whom you love?"

"Whom I used to love—and to whom I gave a certain promise." He explained, adding: "I wish there was a way—"

"There is," laughed the other, and spoke at length.

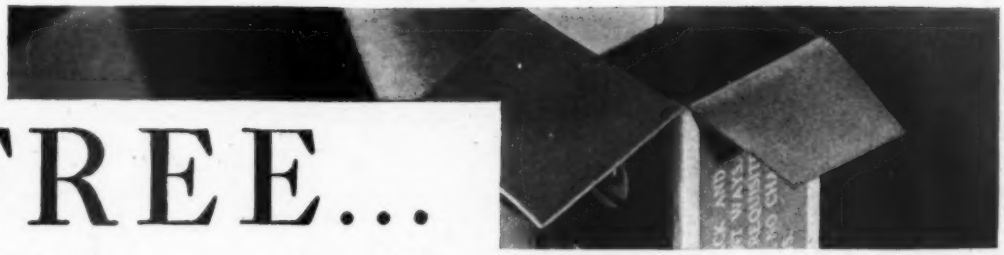
"You are sure about this law?"

"Quite."

"And—you will tell the grocer?"

"Yes."

"May the Prophet bless you, O just man!" said Mehmet; then quickly he slipped around



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the corner as the grocer approached—to be met by the captain's drawn sword and thunderous command:

"Stop, dog!"

Sri Madho salaamed.

"I crave audience with the Grand Vizier."

Again a purse changed hands.

"I shall arrange it for you," promised the captain. "I suppose there is something you wish to sell to the Grand Vizier?"

"No. I want to make a complaint."

"Against whom—may I ask?"

"A certain Mehmet."

"Mehmet?" echoed the other, raising an eyebrow. "You mean, belike, a flame-bearded warrior called Mehmet the Red?"

"The same. A thief he is, a robber—"

"Hush!" came the sibilant whisper. "Have a care! Why,"—lying superbly,— "he is the Grand Vizier's dearest friend. The Grand Vizier gave him his signet ring in token of—"

"The Lord His mercy!" interrupted the grocer, and started to run away.

But the captain called him back:

"Wait! What has Mehmet done?" And as the other hesitated: "You can trust me. I too have reasons for hating him."

Sri Madho told him. "I would cut off my right hand to get rid of him!" he wound up; and the captain replied:

"I can help you."

"If you only would! My gratitude—"

"Can be easily expressed. There is a ruby in your turban—"

"Left to me by my father's father."

"To be inherited by my son's son."

"Here you are!"

The captain's eager palm closed about the stone, and he explained to the grocer the same law he had explained to Mehmet.

"It is the ancient law of High Tartary," he went on. "None may break it. Not even the Grand Khan himself."

THAT is what, an hour later, the grocer repeated triumphantly to the grave citizens assembled in the *aksakal's* house, adding:

"The information would have been cheaply purchased—even had the ruby been genuine —which it was not. It is the very law to settle this matter, the law which says that when a community, Hindu or Moslem, decides that a man is the enemy of peace, anyone, Hindu or Moslem or Christian, native-born or foreigner, can challenge him to combat—by wrestling, not steel. And if the disturber of peace be defeated, he must leave, never to return."

"But who is there," demanded the *aksakal*, "to stand up against this Mehmet and defeat him?"

"I!" shouted the grocer.

"I!" echoed the fruiterer.

"I! I! I!" chimed in tailor and innkeeper and a dozen others.

"And I," said Padmavati from the threshold of the inner apartment, "shall be the messenger and bring the challenge to Mehmet."

She did so that same day; and he winked an eye and replied:

"Good! At noon, in the market square, I shall wrestle the bold, bold lad who wishes it."

Louis Bromfield

who wrote that splendid best-seller "A Good Woman," and whose "Early Autumn" won the Pulitzer novel prize, has written a real love-story which we will publish in an early number—

"City Romance"

NOON came, and the market square was crowded. Men and women were there, old and young, the younger men squatting to one side, a little self-conscious, a little vain as they heard the girls' admiring whispers that here were they, the brave, eager to battle for the sake of peace—so eager that they quarreled as to who should wrestle the stranger.

"I am the strongest," declared the fruiterer.

"My wrists are broader than yours," argued the grocer.

"I have the longest reach. I shall wrestle him."

"No! I—"

And then Mehmet approached.

He slipped off his robe—and there was the dramatic appearance of an immense torso, bare but for a loin-cloth, of arms and legs packed with a fantastic layer of muscle, of a short neck like a bull's. If he had seemed large before, now, without clothes, he seemed a giant—and silence came over the gathering, silence that grew tense and shivering as he dropped into a crouch, his hands jerking out like the paws of a bear; as he roared:

"Allah! There will be this day a grand twisting and breaking of bones! Come on —whoever is the challenger!"

And then—since the truth, however shameful, must be told—there happened that which, for years, was spoken of with mockery and hooting, jeering laughter throughout High Tartary. For nobody accepted the challenge. Not a one.

"This morning," said the fruiterer, "I sprained my ankle."

"My cough bothers me," said the grocer.

The innkeeper was the most honest.

"Let him wrestle who will," he decided. "Personally I refuse. A man would I wrestle. Perhaps the Devil himself. But not a lion, a tiger, an elephant."

Mehmet laughed.

"Come on!" he dared them again, moving forward with a heavy, shambling gait. "Ah—cowards!"

"Cowards!" shrilled the women.

"Cowards!" exclaimed the *aksakal*.

"Cowards!" said even the priest, while Padmavati faced the younger men and said:

"In the past many of you have asked my hand in marriage. Listen then to my promise! Whoever wrestles and defeats this arrogant stranger, his bride I shall become on the morrow. I give oath." She turned to her father. "You agree?"

"Yes. I too give oath."

"I am already married," said the grocer.

"And I," murmured the innkeeper, "would rather be a coward—and a bachelor—and alive."

"Is there not one amongst you," demanded Padmavati, "not one who—"

"I am!" a voice cut in; and Grigori stepped up, to be greeted by a growling, threatening chorus:

"A Christian!"

"A vagabond!"

"What seek you here, O accursed?"

Insults rose, while Grigori waited, smiling a quiet, aloof smile, until the storm had subsided a little.

"Word came to me," he said; and indeed an hour earlier Mehmet had brought him such word, "that a strong man is needed to wrestle this Mehmet."

"A strong man—yes!" yelled the grocer. "But not a Christian!"

"Why *not* a Christian?" cried Padmavati. "Does not the law say that anyone at all can challenge the disturber of peace? Am I not right, Father?"

He inclined his head.

"And too, Father, is there not your oath and mine that—"

"Yes." The *aksakal* looked at his daughter. His eyes twinkled as he began to understand. A Christian? Well, he thought, rather a Christian for a son-in-law than—

"Indeed!" he exclaimed. "Rather a Christian for son-in-law than a coward!"

"And you the man of peace!" mocked Mehmet.

"Man of peace within reason—as you are man of strife quite without reason!"

"You are wrong!" laughed the other. "Strife is sufficient reason in itself."

He turned to Grigori.

"Come on, my little cockerel!" he invited, moving in ponderously, brawny bare arms describing slow arabesques. "*Wah!*" suddenly launching himself upon the challenger. "The sweet, wee sound the breaking of your neck will be!"

Then, as strong body met strong body, he whispered: "Be careful! Let me not lose my temper! Or I might forget that this is in jest—and hurt you!"

FOR quite a while they wrestled—wrestled after the Tartar manner, in which there are no forbidden holds, no fouls of any sort; according to which the kicking foot, the upjerking knee, the biting teeth, the gouging thumb—all and everything is permitted.

It will always remain a debatable question if, throughout, it was clever make-believe, or if, perhaps, after they warmed to the game, they battled in earnest. On this point the two opponents disagreed.

For later on Grigori told his wife:

"Never a chance did he have. I could have thrown him quite early in the fight. But I wanted a bit of fun."

Mehmet, on the other hand, told certain friends:

"I let him throw me. Had I not promised Padmavati? But by my honor, some day I shall return to Samarkand, and take the Christian up to the woods, and—ah,—the things I shall do to him!"

Divergent views.

At all events, there was suddenly a scream, a heave—and Mehmet's great body soaring up, above Grigori's head, hurtling grotesquely. Then a crash—and Mehmet flat on the ground, both shoulders touching the earth—and at once Padmavati rushing up to Grigori and crying:

"The victor! The victor!"

SO, since a law is a law and an oath an oath, there were, the next morning, long-drawn, quivering yells of, "*Yoo-yoo-yoo! Yoo-yoo-yoo!* Happy life to the bridegroom! Happy life to the bride!" as Padmavati and Grigori went to the Hindu temple to receive the priest's blessings, while Mehmet the Red was once more on his way across the fine broad world.

"Wide is the earth," he thought, "and merry the road. And here it is high summer —ah, the very time of year when all the wonderful, new things happen." He laughed. "What things?" he asked himself, told himself: "Women's lips—that are yet to try!"

He tilted his shaggy fur cap over one ear. Steadily he kept on his way toward Bokhara. His friend was there, the Turkoman who had given him the ring. He would like to see him again: a man after his own heart—a fighter of fights and a kisser of kisses.

Late in the afternoon he reached a valley. There he saw a girl of the Sart race, and he walked up to her and put an arm about her waist and said:

"Let me sing you a song all to yourself."

"What sort of song, O bold man?"

"A song of love."

"How does it go?"

"Listen," he whispered; and often in the past he used the same trick of speech with pleasant result, would doubtless use it many a time in the future: "Your locks are storm-dark as the parting of friends, and your smile bright as the noon when friends meet again. And as to your eyes, by my honor, the moon shines in them—though, possibly, it is your eyes which shine in the moon's glory!"

And he kissed her.

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BLONDES



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Esther Ralston, Paramount—"It keeps the skin so very smooth."



Dorothy Mackaill, First National—"It is lovely for the skin."



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BRUNETTES

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Madge Bellamy—Fox
Mary Duncan—Fox
Marie Prevost—Independent
Aileen Pringle—Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer
Irene Rich—Independent
Virginia Valli—Independent
Lya de Putti—Columbia

RED-HEADS

Sally Eilers—Mack Sennett-Pathé
Mary Astor—Fox
Merna Kennedy—Universal
Jacqueline Logan—Pathé
Marjorie Beebe—Fox
Myrna Loy—Warner Brothers
Sally Phipps—Fox
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BROWN HAIR

Betty Bronson—Warner Brothers
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RED-HEADS



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MING

(Continued from page 79)

commentary. In a word—they quarreled. In fact, they quarreled in several words; there were scenes—there were recriminations and even tears.

"If only you had a sense of humor," said Nell, "these stupid misunderstandings would never occur."

"I flatter myself I have a sense of humor," Hugh would retort—and was mad enough to set about establishing the claim by argument.

It is not surprising if, in so doing, he afforded Nell fresh opportunities to draw upon those urns of mirth with which disaffection had so liberally supplied her.

And in the end it simply came to this:

"If every serious thing one says is funny, it's better to say nothing at all."

And this, also, it simply came to:

"Because you cannot and will not accept my point of view," and so forth.

And the final retort proving conclusively that he *had* a sense of humor.

"Your point of view is a trifle too barbed to be acceptable."

Then this—then that—then some stormy tears which unforgivably he made no effort to comfort or to dry.

From these tragic circumstances, it is little wonder if thoughts of parting and dissolution arose. It was not very easy to put these thoughts into words, for they had arrived at that stage of hostility in which the spiritual and physical effort of speaking to one another was almost more than either could encompass.

The determination to part was conveyed monosyllabically, or by attitude and inference. Its final expression was an exchange of letters—his being written in the study and hers in her bedroom. In both instances, Shetland, the parlormaid, acted as postman.

Both Hugh and Nell were greatly shocked when the letters were delivered. They failed to realize a sympathetic affinity betrayed by the fact that both letters were written simultaneously. They were concerned only with each other's injustice and ingratitude.

As neither he nor she had breathed a word of their differences to a third party, their cases were the more grievous.

In the past they had always gone to each other for sympathy as a ship puts in to port for repairs. The hardest thing of all to bear was the closing of the only port or haven in which their troubles were sure to be understood. For Nell, when she chose, was the sweetest of comforters; and her own miseries would vanish as mist when she rested her cheek on the thick of Hugh's arm.

THE first inkling that aught was amiss between his beloved subjects came to Ming when Hugh failed to come to his wife's bed with the arrival of early morning tea. Their rooms adjoined, and so soon as Shetland had entered and drawn Nell's blinds and put the tea-tray on the bedside table, Ming would jump up on the sulphur-colored eiderdown, and Hugh would come from his bedroom, and all three would have a cozy time together until the bath was ready.

It was the right and proper beginning to the day. But Hugh this morning did not appear. Neither did Nell call to him as sometimes she would do when he had turned over and gone to sleep again. Clearly, then, something was amiss; and instead of burying his nose in his paws and sighing in grateful appreciation of eider ducks, Ming sat up on his haunches and asked what the matter was. It was not Ming's habit to sit up for material needs such as biscuit or a little cream—he sat up for explanations. He sat up if he wanted his feet washed after a muddy walk; he sat up if there was too much noise; and he sat up if no one was taking any notice of him. But although, on this particular morning, he sat up to ask what the matter was, Nell did not attempt to explain.

Accordingly Ming left the double bed, and going to the door of Hugh's room, scratched lightly, making a sound that was like beads being rattled in a wooden box. He repeated it twice before the door was opened a few inches to admit him. But instead of coming in and being friendly, Hugh went back to bed again. Ming climbed onto the bed and told him that it was wrong, but Hugh took no notice. Ming waited a little while and then returned to Nell and told her she had better call or say something—but she didn't.

Altogether it was a very unsatisfactory and perplexing business.

It was a Sunday too—panorama day; but no one went to fetch the car. At breakfast there had been squabbly sounds, and after breakfast a door was slammed. Then Nell went to the drawing-room and played sad pieces on the piano, and Hugh shut himself in the study and did the crossword puzzles that he and Nell and Ming should have done together in the evening.

They did not take him out for a walk, and at luncheon there were more squabbly sounds—louder ones. Ming sat up because he did not like them—but they went on.

IT was frightfully difficult for Ming. For some esoteric reason the routine of the household had undergone a disastrous metamorphosis. His two beloved ones had stood his world upon its head. Except at meals they never occupied the same room; consequently half Ming's time was spent in transit between one part of the house and another. Weeks passed before he grasped that what was taking place between Hugh and Nell was, in effect, a counterpart of his conduct when he found himself in disagreeable company. In a word they were kicking up bits of gravel at one another with contemptuous hind legs.

Since of all the emotions love is the one most readily understood by the brain of a dog, the knowledge that love had vanished from the household robbed Ming of his happiness and his tail of its upward slant.

He was in despair. No longer were two pairs of eyes smilingly focused upon him; no longer did a white hand and a brown meet lovingly on the silky roughness of his little coat. The gentleness of voice and the comfort of soft words was silenced. The light had gone out of the sun.

And the wretched weeks went by.

With the exchange of the letters and the consequent inevitability of parting there only remained to decide upon a division of property. As Hugh and Nell were no longer on speaking terms, this entailed fresh correspondence.

Nell wrote that it would be simpler if Hugh would make a list of what he wanted. He replied that she could take what she liked. He didn't care what he had. He got his answer on the house telephone.

"In that case I'll take Ming."

"You can't. Ming belongs to me," he shouted.

"How can you say that?"

"He was given by my friend."

"He was given to us."

"To me."

"To *us.*"

Pain and fear were clutching at both their hearts.

"Is this a new sample of your humor?" he asked.

"A woman wants some affection," she replied, unfairly.

Heaven knows where the discussion would have ended. It was interrupted by Shetland, who appeared upset about something.

"Have you got Prince Ming, sir?" she asked.

"No, but I'm going to have him," said Hugh resolutely.

Then Shetland:

"The front door was open. I've searched the house, sir, and been up and down the street, but I can't find him nowhere."

"What!" cried Hugh, and rushed from the room, mounted the stairs three at a stride and found Nell on the top landing with the house telephone still at her ear.

"Is this some trick of yours? Have you bagged him already?"

"Bagged who?"

"Ming."

"Isn't he with you?" There was no guile in that reply.

"Stolen!" shouted Hugh, then clattered downstairs and rushed hatless from the house.

A quarter of an hour later, out of breath, scarlet-cheeked, he met Nell at a corner. She also was hatless.

"Any luck?" But she knew the question was hopeless.

He shook his head.

"Not a sign."

He saw her catch her lower lip between white teeth, tears start to her eyes, and he said suddenly:

"Don't worry, darling. I'll find him, if I knock at every door in London."

"Yes." She nodded, and their hands met as they were used to meet in an emergency. And although his was wet and sticky from exertion and anxiety, and although his hair was hanging all over his forehead and his tie was out, she couldn't see anything funny in him at all. . . . .

It must have been after the parcels post that the door had been left open. Ming had seen the streak of sunlight it admitted when he was trying to effect contact between the warring elements of the household. The sunlight had drawn him magnetically, and he wanted to go out. He was reflecting that the time was ripe to return when—at the end of a string, and accompanied by a very unprepossessing individual—there passed by a Pekinese princess of most melancholy cast. She did not precede her companion as a royal person should do even when on a lead, but was dragged at the end of the string like a child's toy.

Distressed not alone by her deportment but by the sinister appearance of her conductor, Ming growled a protest and followed in their wake.

"In the name of Confucius," he demanded, "what persuades you to parade the streets of Chelsea in this company and condition?"

The princess was about to explain, and paused to do so, but this was not permitted. The string tightened with a jerk.

With increasing indignation Ming continued to follow. He had reached the corner of the street when an incredible thing occurred. The disreputable man, stooping suddenly, whisked Ming off the pavement and dropped him into a capacious inner pocket of his overcoat.

AT first Ming made a valiant attempt to bite his way out, for being Chinese by descent, he knew at once that he was in the hands of pirates. But the pocket was canvas-lined and offered no tooth hold. Besides, biting had never been Ming's strongest suit. It cannot be said that he was afraid, for fear and perfect faith do not exist together in any one being. Ming's faith was stronger than high mountains. He realized that disaster had befallen him, and that he would probably be held to ransom, but his confidence in being restored to his subjects never for one instant faltered. Sometimes for a caprice in the country, Ming had hidden himself in bracken and listened for as long as twenty minutes while Nell and Hugh called and besought him to reveal his whereabouts.



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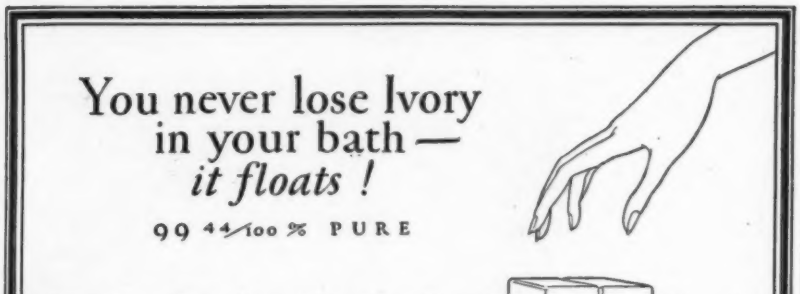
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The Red Book Magazine publishes each month the largest and most representative list of school announcements to be found in any magazine. Consult our School Directory and write direct to the schools which interest you. The principals are, at all times, glad to send catalogues and answer letters of inquiry. If you do not find a school in pages 7-23 which seems to answer your requirements as to courses or location, ask our assistance.

The Red Book Magazine's Department of School Information has helped hundreds of parents select schools for their boys and girls. We have also helped many young people who appeal to us to find a school where they may procure just the training for a chosen occupation. The same service is at your disposal. Our service is based on personalized information obtained through visits to representative schools in all parts of the country. In order to be fully helpful we need data on the following: type of school—college preparatory or general academic (in the case of a boy, military or non-military), finishing, post-graduate, business, technical, secretarial, art, music, dramatic, dancing, etc., in what section of the country; approximate amount you plan to pay per year for board and tuition, or tuition only for schools of special training; exact age, religion, and previous education of prospective pupil. Enclose stamped return envelope and address

The Director, Department of Education

THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE

420 Lexington Avenue, New York City

It had been a test of their loyalty, and it had never failed. Because of that test he knew that they would never rest until he had been safely restored to his kingdom.

A few moments later he felt the sway and tremble of a moving vehicle beneath him, and knew he was being swept away from civilization to the haunts of evil and crime.

THAT night Hugh lay awake and stared in sorrow at the ceiling. He had during the afternoon walked many miles of London streets and visited no fewer than four police stations.

"A val'able dawg like that wont never be brought back for a 'nordinary reward," a sergeant had told him, and had added: "You had ought to've took more care if you was all that fond of him."

Hugh had resented angrily the neglect implied, but now in the darkness a wider and more intimate application of the words took shape. One should take care of the things one is fond of. It doesn't do to leave doors open that they may slip out by—or doors closed which deny them entry.

Feeling rather queer and very shy, Hugh threw off the bedclothes and quietly opened the door that led to Nell's room. For a while he stood scarcely breathing, listening for the sounds of sleep.

Then Nell's voice whispered: "That you?"

"Yes. You're not asleep?"

"No."

"You're worrying, Nell?"

"Yes."

"We'll find him," he said, but didn't sound very sure of it.

"Poor little Ming!" she answered, and her voice was dry and choky.

He came nearer and found her hand.

"We seem to have lost so much—and thrown away the rest," she murmured.

He could not trust himself to answer. He sat on the bed and fondled her hand.

Presently he said huskily: "My fault."

But a woman will not let a man be right, even when he blames himself.

"No, mine. I've been difficult—I'm sorry."

"We've been a pair of mugs," he said.

They thought about that for a full minute.

Then Nell said: "Aren't you cold sitting there—without anything round you?"

He could not see her arms held out to him except by inference.

In the darkness it was easier to find what they had lost than by the hard light of day.

OF course they owed it all to Ming, and early next morning Hugh set out with a fierce determination. There was no precedent for the course he followed. He drove the car to a bird-fancier's shop in Seven Dials. There was a girl in charge, which was not very promising, but she told Hugh that her grandfather was in his room at the back.

Her grandfather was stuffing a parrot when Hugh presented himself. He wore two pairs of glasses on his nose, and a third was perched on his forehead. His hands were like the roots of an old tree. For company he had a tortoise.

As a consultation-fee Hugh laid a fiver on the bench.

And presently the sage spoke, and speaking, revealed the practice of dog-thieves and the etiquette of owners who sought to recover their lost pets. Also he gave Hugh an address in the Fulham Road.

It was all very mysterious, but Hugh nodded and remembered and made promises of what he would forget. Then he drove to the Fulham Road and found a newspaper shop and was advised to climb to the top floor and knock at the left-hand door. This he did, and found a very large man in a very small bed. The large man was reading the personal column of a newspaper and making marks with a pencil. He asked what Hugh wanted.

Hugh said he wanted an Alsatian. He

had had, he said, a Pekinese, but had lost it, so he wanted an Alsatian.

The man in bed rubbed an unshaven chin and looked Hugh over for symptoms of treachery. Finding none, he fished a much-thumbed notebook from under his pillow and consulted it. While so employed, he made general observations.

"A chap—the very spit o' you—went to buy a nalsatian from a bloke o' my acquaintance. While 'e was there, he sorra dawg which he made out was one as 'e'd lorst. So the bloke I knew pret' near knocked 'is block orf."

"And rightly," said Hugh, who remembered what the sage had told him.

"'Ow much'll you give?"

"Twenty pounds."

The answer was satisfactory; so the man decanted himself from bed, and being fully dressed, save for his boots, speedily accompanied Hugh to the street.

They alighted from the car at a singularly mean street in Shoreditch, and after wading through a rubbish-heap came at last to a railway arch boarded in with rotten sleepers behind which there was a great deal of snuffling and scratchings. In response to a peculiar knock a few of the boards detached themselves, and a lean, bird-faced man squeezed himself out into the misty sunshine.

This individual and Hugh's conductor engaged apart in a whispered discussion. Presently Birdface reëntered the arch and emerged with a bulldog at the end of a chain. He said he reckoned it was just what Hugh wanted.

Hugh didn't seem to think so.

"Better come in, then, and 'ave a look round."

So Hugh squeezed through the narrow entrance and found himself in an atmosphere reeking of dogs in captivity. It was very dark, but he could see pin-points of light from many eyes peering at him.

Then, sudden as a crash of bells, came the sound of Ming's royal salute.

NOW, when a Pekinese abandons itself to ecstasy, it produces a noise that touches pinnacles of hysteria and **cacophony.** In that moment Hugh very nearly lost his head. He could feel rather than see the two men stiffen in readiness to knock off his block should he forget himself. But he did not forget himself. He stood like a rock until from sheer exhaustion and dismay at Hugh's failure to recognize him, the fervor of Ming's welcome had spent itself.

"If it wasn't a nalsatian you was lookin' for, you could 'ave that lil' dawg and welcome," said Birdface. "A proper lil' devil 'e is, too. Bit me 'and every time I comes near 'im."

"Let's have a light," said Hugh unsteadily.

The beam of a torch lit up a wretched hencoop and a royal captive.

The sight sent the blood surging to Hugh's temples. With trembling hands he pulled four fivers from his pocket and crammed them into Birdface's palm.

"You're a gentleman," said Birdface, spat upon the notes for luck and tipped the coop over sidewise.

Hugh stopped, picked up Ming with his left arm and led the way outside. Birdface followed, but he was barely through the gap in the planks when Hugh turned on him.

"I believe it is not etiquette," he said, "to make remarks about previous ownership in this foul hole, but I see nothing to stop me doing this." And with all his strength, he crashed his fist into Birdface's jaw.

As Birdface settled like melting wax to the ground, the infuriated countenance of Hugh's conductor was thrust through the gap.

"Hi! What's this?" he demanded.

"That," said Hugh, and uppercut him to the point so viciously that he vanished into darkness and oblivion.

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As they picked their way across the rubbish heap, Ming, forgetful of noble birth and the graces of tradition, barked derisively at the fallen.

THERE never was such a homecoming nor such a home to come back to.

Ming sat on the table, while Hugh and Nell dined together. He even lapped up a drop of some champagne which had been spilled, so as to enter into the spirit that animated their reunion.

Those differences he had lamented so deeply before he was stolen had vanished. Hugh and Nell did the crossword puzzle together that evening, and he helped them to do it, with his head between their knees.

And that night, when he was turning round three times before settling down in his basket, he knew for sure that it would be quite all right about the early morning tea.

Ming sighed and stretched himself luxuriously and licked his sooty nose with a coral tongue.

"M'm errrr," he said.

And it meant: "All's well."

MANHATTAN MIRAGE

(Continued from page 51)

a month be too short? Would they stay on in Drochester longer? With Walter's elated accents ringing in her ears, his radiant face before her, her mind kept wandering off into the smallest details, petty questions—who would be the best firm to pack the glass and china? She heard Walter's voice raised too high, a little strident, a little raw, and she saw a sudden discomfort in James Terry's eyes. The boy turned restlessly.

"There isn't a man in town among my contemporaries who wont be green when they read the evening papers, though they'll pretend to be pleased as Punch."

Nancy was leaning forward, drinking it in, loving it. But James Terry turned slowly red, and looked away. Effie knew exactly what he was feeling; he was ashamed, ashamed for his father. Now he looked to her once more, this time with appeal. She must release him. "Run along, James," she said. "I don't want you to be late again." The words were a spring to him; he hurried out as if pursued. Walter paused, looked after him, frowning. "It isn't time for him to go back to school, is it?" he said.

"He's got a special lesson to prepare," improvised Effie. "That's why he's in such a hurry."

"Well, you'd think—" began Walter, then looked back to Nancy. "You've not got lessons on *your* mind, Nancy!" Then, with a little approving laugh, to Effie: "She's old enough to appreciate what this means to us all."

"When'll I get my pearls, Dad?" asked Nancy eagerly. "I want to tell Ariana when I go back."

"Oh, as soon as we get settled in New York," said Walter largely.

"And speaking of going back," said Effie, "you and I, Nancy, must start about half-past two. I have a committee meeting here at half-past four."

"Oh, Mother," sighed Nancy, "couldn't I stay tonight and go back tomorrow morning?"

"Darling child," said Effie, "you know you mustn't do that. Back to the dragons, back to the grind!"

"Well, please, please, both of you, don't do a lot of things without telling me. I want to hear every least little scrap, and be in on everything. It's so terribly exciting."

"I'll telephone you every day until you calm down," promised Effie. "But we've got to start to Haberton. Yes, and you, Walter—look at the time."

"I'll be ready as soon as I've phoned to a couple of people," caroled Nancy. "I ought to be scared to death to go back and face the Rug, but somehow I can't worry about it. Good-by, Dad, angel-pie!"

AS soon as she had gone, Effie said to Walter, hesitantly: "Don't you think you'd best let me put Nancy off the idea of pearls for a while? D'you know what a good string costs?" She felt quite sure he didn't; he never knew prices.

"Oh, I suppose a thousand or two," he said largely. "That will be all right."

"You can get a short, not very good string for six or seven thousand, but anything well matched and perfect will cost from twelve to fifteen, and not be, as James says, such a much, even then."

"Whe-e-ew! Are you sure?"

"Yes, I am. I didn't want to tell you while she was in the room."

"Well, let her feel she's to have them the first minute I can afford them. But of course it's out of the question now. I wish I'd known—"

She felt that she had wantonly put a pin in one of his balloons. "It doesn't matter," she said soothingly. "You can get her something else. She wont mind."

BUT she was not so sure. On the way to Haberton she listened to Nancy's own ballooning; what Manie said, what Bruce said. "They weren't either of them really glad, I don't believe. I told Manie she could visit me in New York—she liked that. But Bruce didn't seem pleased at all."

"He'll miss you, perhaps."

"Yes, he said that." Nancy waited a moment. "Mother, I think men are so unreasonable!" she burst out. "Of course Bruce has always been my friend, and I've always liked him better than the other boys—not a whole lot better, but he's more dependable, you know; but he needn't get ideas in his head! I don't want to *marry* him! I don't want to marry anybody, now!"

"He didn't expect you to marry him, did he?" asked Effie, anxious to know, but keeping a most casual manner. "He hardly could have proposed over the telephone."

"No, I didn't mean that—but it was sort of in the air. He sounded—proprietary, you know. Too dumb!"

"Men are unaccountable," said Effie, seeing her chance. "And that reminds me: don't be too much attached to the idea of a string of pearls. Your father hasn't the least idea of what a good string costs. You know how he is."

"Oh, but, Mother—he promised—he promised—it's the one thing I want—it means everything to me—" Bruce was forgotten; Nancy became a disappointed child.

"Nancy, I can only tell you what I told him: a good string of pearls costs between twelve and fifteen thousand dollars. Your father's salary in this new place will be sixty thousand. He can't spend a fourth or a fifth of that to buy you a trinket, can he? Do you see how economically absurd that would be? When he makes more money, he'll probably buy them for you, because he wants nothing so much as to give you and me and James Terry the things we long for. Just soft-pedal on the idea for a while, because you'll only worry and distress him if you keep on talking of it."

"But, Mother! Oh, goodness, I didn't know they cost so much either! Oh, that just ruins everything! What'll I say to Ariana now! Why—look, Mother—why, sixty thousand isn't such a lot, after all! It isn't being really *rich!*"

"Nancy, I wish you wouldn't compel me to be the stern parent pointing out the obvious in a superior, instructive way.

You've got a perfectly good head, only you've lost it today. Think this over, my dear. Here's your father, who's been doing quite as well in his business as most men, and a great deal better than the average, who's just had an offer to do more important work in a more important city, at three times his present income. That's extraordinary, Nancy, and it's splendid. What more do you want, what more could you expect? He hasn't suddenly been made a multi-millionaire, but that doesn't belittle his remarkable advance. Do you see, Nancy?"

"Yes, I see," said Nancy, subdued. "But still, Ariana—"

"I'm going to make only one more didactic observation, my child; but listen to it well, I urge you. If you can only be contented and happy because you've got the things Ariana or anyone else has got, then you'll never, never be contented and happy. There'll always be some one, somewhere, who has more than you. We've got to live by our own standards, not Ariana's, nor the Pardees', nor the Bergers', nor the Queen of England's. There, the lecture for today is finished. You don't really need it, because you know all these things perfectly well, but you've been just a bit—you know—" She smiled round at Nancy's intentness.

Nancy relaxed, smiled back. "I'm thankful you don't talk to me as if I were a child the way some mothers do. I'd loathe it."

"So would I."

"And I'll try to have more sense; really I will."

"Don't try very hard," said Effie; "I don't want you to be too sensible. You'd have me at an awful disadvantage."

"I hate telling Ruggles—about the toothache, you know, Mother."

Effie thought it over. She knew how childishness and maturity were waging constant battle in Nancy's heart and brain; she felt an intense yearning sympathy for her, and she was certain that Miss Ruggles would arrange a punishment far beyond the seriousness of the present crime. "Let's make a bargain," she said. "Suppose you don't say anything to Miss Ruggles, except to report that you're back and that I brought you, and that your tooth has been attended to, and that you're sorry to have been so much trouble. I'll not give you away. I know you'll never do it again. And to square yourself, in your own mind, I mean, you'll make up your lost classes and you'll forget all about pearls and such grandeur until we can afford them. How about it?"

"Oh, Mother," sighed Nancy, "you're a solid gold angel; you are indeed! I'll be the best girl you ever imagined—so good, and studying so hard! And not even looking cross-eyed at a pearl necklace!"

EFFIE, as she drove back alone, found that she had brought a measure of peace to herself by talking things over with Nancy. She had stated Walter's achievement in plain terms, and found more satisfaction in it than she had been able to find before. After all, it was a splendid, extraordinary thing! And she ought to be proud of him, and not sitting about criticizing him for a certain tendency to estimate it in terms of other men's jealousy. And she ought not to feel that hateful little regret that he hadn't had her generous, loving letter, that she hadn't had a share in helping him to make his decision. "I'm jealous, myself," she admitted, "and that's pretty small, I must say. I don't see that I ought to look down on Joan Pardee for rushing out and buying everything in sight when Carl got his raise—I'm no better, even if I'm different. I've been somehow grudging about this." She determined that Walter would have no further complaint about her enthusiasm.



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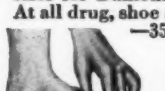
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To be sure, they were venturing out into the unknown. Yet it could not be wildly different. There would be a house to take care of, three meals a day to plan, the round of cleaning and laundry and mending and all the petty details of living to be shaped. They would have to make new friends—but wasn't she getting tired of the old ones? Suddenly she remembered Mr. Bishop, how his enthusiasm for the city shone through his indifference and control like a sharp strong light behind a curtain—"the extraordinary pageant," he had called it, with such relish in his voice. Well, they too, herself and Walter, were to be players in that pageant. And she wondered if it would not be possible to talk to Mr. Bishop when she went down to New York to look for an apartment. He might be a valuable mentor—and friend.

As she drove up to her own door she saw by the cars parked in the street that her committee was already assembled. She hurried in, and as she entered her living-room a chorus of fervid voices greeted her as one:

"Oh, Effie—isn't this just too wonderful about Walter!"

Chapter Ten

THIS chorus, once begun, swelled on wildly for the days that followed after the public announcement of Walter Reyburn's new position. The telephone rang constantly; there were many notes and letters, and neither Effie nor Walter could appear on the street without being seized upon by friends and acquaintances who "must hear all about it." Congratulations mingled with lamentation, envy and much advice about living in New York from those who knew least about it. The employees of the bank presented Walter with a handsome silver tray at a luncheon over which Parkinson, grim and saturnine, was obliged to preside. The old man, who had refused indignantly Walter's suggestion to join his institution with another, was having a hard time. He grimly maintained that he could get along excellently with young Willis in Walter's place, but there was bitter obstinacy and unreasonableness in every move which this reorganization required. But Walter was free of him now.

Effie was lunched and tea-ed by her clubs and her friends until she felt that the sight of a platter of lobster mayonnaise or a nut sandwich would cause her to shriek.

"My face," she told Walter, "is taking on a set smirk, expressing pleasure that so many people regret my going, mixed with my own appropriate regrets at leaving so many admiring friends."

For the two of them there were endless dinner-parties. The Pardees gave the first, a return courtesy for the one the Reyburns had given for Carl's advancement a month or so before; but a stiffness, a constraint, bound their hosts, and their felicitations were palpably words alone. "We didn't make such a fizzle of it when we entertained them," exulted Walter afterward. "Though I didn't feel any better about it than Carl feels about me now. But we put up a lot better front; I know we did."

Effie agreed. The Pardee party was obvious and forced. It had, though, in her opinion, one great superiority over their own—which was that Carl had refrained from any attempt at sentimentality. She had said nothing of that bad moment to Walter, and she still kept silence—if she could do no more for Carl, she felt she need not make him seem as ridiculous to Walter as he was to her.

But there were dear and touching incidents in the welter of curiosity and jealousy and conventional parting courtesies. Sally Grove came over to see Effie one morning and burst into loud tears and laments: "Of course, I'm just a silly little thing and everybody thinks so, but I have my feelings," she sobbed. "And I just love you, Effie; I always have ever since we were children; and I've always thought of you as just what I'd like to be myself if I had any brains. When I get blue and fed up with everything, I look across the street and think of you and Walter and how happy you are, and how nice, and how beautiful it all is, and it cheers me up—you've no idea! I can't bear to have you go away, I simply can't bear it! Don't forget me, Effie, will you? Write to me sometimes, and come back and visit me. It's horrid to say so, and I don't actually mean it, but I could find it in my heart to wish that Walter wasn't so damned clever, and would have to stay right here in Drochester all his life. Yes, I'm as selfish as that. And Perky is, too."

And quite as sincere as the weeping Sally, but more restrained, was no less a personage than Mrs. Berger. "I'll miss you, Effie, more than I can tell you. You've been the one whom I could always count on in the club to be square, and frank, and willing to do her share of the work without shirking. I've felt that the place you were really destined for was to succeed me in the presidency. I've had that in mind for two years."

And Effie knew, in saying that, Mrs. Berger was offering her the greatest tribute she knew how to frame.

Of different interest, and even more vital, was a talk with young Bruce Ledge. He met Effie on the street one day and asked if he might join her. He was important and serious as only youth can be, and though he stammered and flushed, he managed to say what he wanted to say—and clearly.

"I think a great deal of Nancy, Mrs. Reyburn; I guess you know that," he began. "I think she's the—the finest girl I know. I don't believe there's any other girl to compare with her. I—I don't bother about any other girl, and I haven't, for years and years and years."

Effie held back her smile at this great length of time of his devotion. "I know, Bruce," she said, gently. "You've been a very good friend to Nancy. I think she appreciates it. I'm sure I do, because I've always felt when she was with you that she was being taken care of just as well as if I myself or her father was with her."

Bruce squared his shoulders. "Why, of course, Mrs. Reyburn. But you see—Nancy—well, when she told me you were going to move to New York I said something—I didn't mean to, but I said something she got sore at, and she's not been the same to me since. It—it's been very hard on me, feeling as I do. I,"—he swallowed hard, but plunged,—"I—love Nancy very much, Mrs. Reyburn. I couldn't care about anyone else, ever. I hate to have her feeling sore at me."

"I think you must remember that Nancy is still, in many ways, very young, Bruce, while you are a grown man, with a man's strength of feeling. Her nature is undeveloped, emotionally, I mean. You must keep that in mind when you talk with her."

HE turned grateful, ingenuous eyes to her. "Yes, I guess that is what's the matter. I see what you mean, Mrs. Reyburn. You're awfully kind. I guess,"—he grinned ruefully,—"I guess I'd better eat a slice of humble pie and—and wait—till she comes round. You—you don't mind my feeling this way about Nancy, do you?"

"There'd be no use in my minding, would there? The one thing I would mind is if you and Nancy should think yourselves in love with one another, and later find out you were mistaken, when it was too late,

I mean. I don't want her rushed or overpersuaded, Bruce—you see?"

"There's not much chance of that. Nancy's not easy to rush. She's too much the other way. You want me to wait a little, and not say anything, don't you? But it's so hard to do it when she's going away, and gosh knows what kind of fellows she'll meet down in New York. Gosh, Mrs. Reyburn, being grown-up isn't easy, is it?"

"You'll find that it has certain compensations," said Effie. "A nice boy," she thought, as he left her. "If Nancy should marry him she would always be safe. Just as I am with Walter." She wondered if she ought to tell Walter what Bruce had said, but presently decided that she would not—he was so fractious and unreasonable at any mention of Nancy falling in love and marrying. There was no use to stir him up on the subject needlessly, and make him any more prejudiced against Bruce.

She wanted to talk everything—except Nancy and Bruce—over with Walter; it would help to suppress that strange and unpleasant hint that they were no longer traveling side by side, but that he had rushed on far ahead and away from her. But he was very full of affairs, and didn't want to be bothered with the details she found so important.

"Go ahead and do what you like," he said impatiently. "I can't spare the time to decide anything. I don't understand you, Effie—usually you seem so capable, and now you unload on me! We wont get anywhere in New York if you don't take a line of your own. I can't run the whole show."

Two speeches like this, and Effie was again wondering what was the matter with her—was she suffering from inferiority, was she balking at her own proper job, or was Walter—as she could not help suspecting now and then—simply dramatizing his rôle of Big Man even in small ways. She did not decide, but she stopped consulting him. "I may be merely an appendage," she told herself, with an effort at humor, "but I'll be a self-sustaining appendage, no matter what mistakes I make."

IT was in this spirit that she went down to New York with Walter just before Christmas to look for a place to live. Nancy, in spite of wild and rebellious begging, did not go with them—that was one little matter Effie decided on her own.

Nor did she talk to Walter about the location or size of their new home. She knew he would be disappointed if it was not in a smart section; she knew he would hate cramped quarters; and she was well aware that an apartment without these two drawbacks would cost extravagantly. She asked him what he felt was their limit on rental, and was cheered when he said he hadn't the least idea.

"While you're seeing the people in your new bank," she said, "I'll go to some real-estate people and get a list and look round."

Very easy to say, but perplexing and wearying to do! Effie became used to the appraising glance of the snappy slick young men of the real-estate offices—they knew, she felt sure, exactly how much her coat and hat cost, and that they were Drochester, not metropolitan products! "How many rooms do you want, and what do you wish to pay?" they would ask, while their expressionless eyes looked her up and down, until she found it comic. At last she entered into the hard-boiled spirit of it. "Seven to eight master's rooms at least, three or four baths, a good location and a reasonable price," she would return, also expressionless, looking them over in her own turn. It was plain they were not used to this. Several of them went human at once; others were annoyed and tried to be still more aloof and superior. These Effie dropped. With the others she

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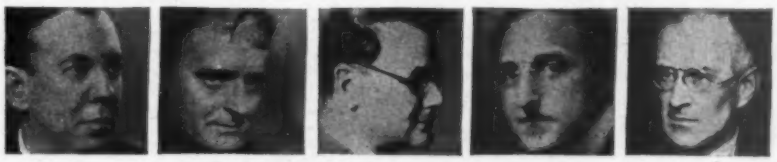
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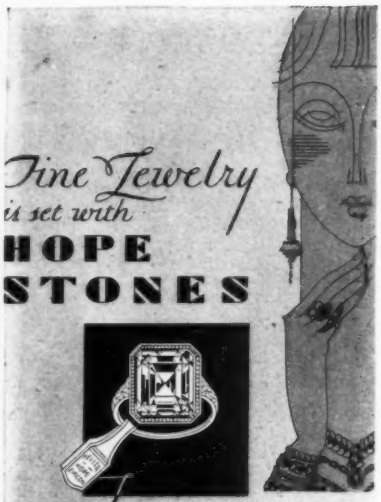
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made appointments, read lists, and began a series of dreary pilgrimages of inspection. She saw apartments, plain and duplex, dark and light, old and new, low-ceilinged and high, papered and paneled and plastered, with one big living-room about which clustered a bunch of cubicles dignified by the name of bedrooms, or with all small rooms, with fireplaces and without, with plenty of bathrooms and with few—but never, in any case, did she see an apartment where the rent asked was anything less than two or three times what the accommodation was actually worth. The motto of the agents was: "We can get it, if not from you, from some one else."

In the evening, when she and Walter dined together and went to the theater, she hardly knew what she was eating, and she couldn't keep her mind on the play for thinking apartments.

Walter was so absorbed in his own day's achievements, and relating the saga thereof—this great man he had seen—that conference he had sat in at—what he had said to So-and-so which caused So-and-so to open his eyes—how he was going to make the whole lot sit up and take notice once he got there for keeps—he poured all this into Effie's ears, and never observed that her attention was but an excellent attitude.

Chapter Eleven

WHEN they were due to go home in two days, and Effie had accomplished nothing but her own fatigue, she took her courage in her hands, and called up Mr. Bishop, and after some cool parley with a zealous secretary was permitted to speak to him.

He still sounded sleepy, but cordial. "Of course,—Mrs. Reyburn, of Drochester,—why, please don't recall yourself to me! I didn't know you were in town, though I'd heard that Mr. Reyburn was. This is more than kind of you to let me know."

"I should like to see you, very much," said Effie. "I must find a place to live, and so far everything I like I can't afford, and I wouldn't be caught dead in what I can afford. You're such an ardent New Yorker I thought perhaps a few words from you would help me to decide."

"If you're free for lunch today," suggested Mr. Bishop promptly, "I'd be charmed to talk over your difficulties with you. And perhaps Mr. Reyburn will join us."

"He can't," replied Effie, "and I'd much rather talk with you alone. But I didn't mean to take up more than a very few minutes of your time—" She realized that she was floundering, but she did want him to know that she had not meant to wangle a luncheon invitation.

She had a feeling that Mr. Bishop understood. He sounded much less sleepy. "I hope you'll lunch with me," he urged, "for frankly that's the only chance I'd have today to see you. This happens to be one of my crowded days."

So, at one-thirty precisely, Mr. Bishop called for her in a handsome small town car. They went to a quiet French place in the East Fifties, and Effie felt that he was genuinely pleased to see her, and that he knew she actually wanted his advice. He talked at once of her problem.

"It's very hard for strangers just coming to New York to find a place to live that's comfortable and convenient, too. I am going to make a suggestion. Take a furnished apartment for six months or a year, until you know what you want, then choose for yourself, with this experience behind you, and have it decorated to suit your own taste."

"And put my own things in storage?"

"Yes, in Drochester. Storage rates will be less there. Or rent your own house furnished."

"I'd rather store my things."

"I know that attachment to one's own belongings," he said. "I feel very much that same way. Now I must tell you that after you telephoned to me this morning I had my secretary telephone to several friends of mine, and I have learned of a delightful furnished apartment that you can get for the price of it unfurnished. The people who have had it want to get rid of it at once. I'll give you the address, and you might go to see it after luncheon."

"Is it very expensive?"

"Ten thousand. One of the few houses in New York where there is absolutely no one questionable. You'll see no quaint little blondes about, ever. You'll have to be vouched for by Mr. Reyburn's new associates to get in, even as a subtenant. That's why the place hasn't been let at once—and it's been available for two weeks."

"But that was awfully kind of you, to have it looked up for me," said Effie.

"You will find in New York," replied Mr. Bishop, "that it is not a great deal of use to deal through general agencies for the things you want. Get addresses, dealers, workpeople, shops and so on from your friends. Such addresses have been strained through various discriminating intelligences."

"Tell me more," begged Effie. "Oh, I knew you were the one person who could really bring me out of the chaos where I've been groping. Talk to me about New York. Walter expects me to know what to do by instinct."

"There is only one safe rule for a stranger in New York," replied Mr. Bishop. "He must believe nothing that he's told until he has tested it for himself. Would you mind a very impertinent question?"

"I can't imagine you asking me anything I'd mind. But if you do, I can refuse to answer."

"Are you pleased with this new move? Do you welcome the change as much as your husband does? I have no right to ask, but I am interested to know."

"I wasn't at first. But now I think I shall like it, especially if this apartment you've suggested turns out to be what I want. This living business has bothered me."

Mr. Bishop considered this reply for some time. Then he said, as if the subject were quite finished: "You'll find the absolute impersonality of New York very restful."

AND through the remainder of the luncheon he talked agreeably about music, only at the very end offering his car to go to see the apartment. But Effie refused it, saying she would walk. It wasn't far, and she found it easily. If it was not quite so spacious as she wished, at least it was high, and on Park Avenue, and there was a setback space before it cunningly arranged as a veranda. This veranda, with its spacious view of the city, fascinated Effie, made her want the place. She felt she could never be lonely or bored when she could look out from such a height. She liked the other part of the apartment only fairly well; it was done in an extreme style, a stiff, correct Louis Quatorze, the coquetry and lightness of the period strangely missing. There was little color; the curtains and upholsteries were gray and dull blue, the woodwork gray, the chairs and tables and chests in a subdued walnut. "I can put in some brilliant pillows and splash things up a bit with flowers," thought Effie. "James Terry'll run away if he has to sleep in that little room in gray taffeta!" The kitchen was small, but had many conveniences. The longer she looked at it, the more the place amused and drew her. Since she was making a break with all the old ways and places, why not break with all the old surroundings, take a fresh start?

The house itself seemed well managed; the entrance was so imposing that she wondered if she would ever be able to walk in without smiling at its pomp. Inquiry brought

out the fact that there was an excellent restaurant in one end of the huge building, and that service might be obtained at all times—any sort of service, apparently: cooking, cleaning, waiting, lady's maid, valet. "The apartment would not be available," said the assistant manager, who had been told off to show it to Effie, "but the present tenants, who have a very long lease, are going to Paris to obtain a divorce. They have agreed that whichever one first remarries shall have the apartment again, but that gives the subtenant a full six months, and possibly a year. They are both very fond of this apartment, you see."

Effie gasped at this announcement, delivered in a perfectly commonplace manner. Then she saw that she mustn't gasp, and so she repressed her surprise.

"Suppose I take it for the six months, then?" she said. "And if we should want it longer, we can make some further arrangements, perhaps."

The assistant manager thought this might be possible. They descended to his office and went into the matter of references, advance payments and the like. As she went out, with everything settled, Effie felt a sense of elation. She had done all of this without Walter; she had made her own decision; she had acted entirely on her own judgment and volition.

SHE wrote a note to Mr. Bishop, telling him she had taken the apartment and thanking him. She wrote it so that no response was necessary, but he telephoned to her, and congratulated her on her discrimination, and added, with evident sincerity: "My experience is at your service; please use it whenever you wish."

"I don't believe you'd say that if you didn't mean it," said Effie.

"Ah," said Mr. Bishop, "you are always justifying my first impression of you."

"And since New York is so impersonal," replied Effie, "I wont even ask you what that impression was." She heard his sleepy chuckle at the other end of the wire; and she felt, as before, that in this odd and quiet man she had found a friend.

When she told Walter of the apartment, he made no protest at all. "I'm glad it's all settled," he said. "If you like it, it's all right with me; and if Bishop recommended it, it's sure to be good. That old boy—you wouldn't believe how many ways I've run across his trail! He's the bank's attorney, and he's got a selected group of the richest and most powerful interests in the country as his clients. Effie, this is going to be a lot bigger job than I imagined at first. I'm sizing it up, little by little, and every time I look further into it, the more there is to grasp. Bishop's a man to stand in with—I'm glad he's taken such a fancy to you."

"I like him," said Effie. "The way he talks makes me think of a Henry James novel, somehow."

"He's more like Jesse James in business," said Walter. "He sits there, apparently taking a nap, and when everybody else has had his say, he comes out with something that shows he was a mile ahead of all of them. He's a marvel. Even Villiers, and he's Chairman of the Board, pipes down when Bishop speaks. And Burton—he's the gabbiest of the lot of directors—shuts up like a clam."

"Is Mr. Villiers married?" asked Effie, idly.

"I don't know. Funny thing—I don't know a darned thing about any of those men—personally, I mean. I did hear Burton say something about going to the opera, but he didn't say it to me. I suppose, when we come on here, and get located, we'll meet some of their families, if they've got any."

Effie wondered. She remembered what Mr. Bishop had said about New York's impersonality. He must, she thought, have meant it for a warning.

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Walter was talking on. "I've got to be mighty careful, for a while; I've got to watch my step. One word too many, one false move, and I'd be under suspicion."

"What d'you mean, under suspicion?" Effie was indignant.

"Of not being as bright as they think I am. They brought me on here believing that I can do a lot of things for them—it wasn't any benevolent scheme on their part. If I make good, in a reasonable time, they'll push me along. If I don't make good, they'll push me out, and be perfectly cold-blooded about it."

"I don't see that they're much better than Mr. Parkinson. You're taking a frightful risk, seems to me."

"Effie," he said, and now he was looking at her, and was intent on her, "aren't you satisfied? It's true that this move is a risk. The more I see of it, the greater I know that risk to be. And I'm risking you, and Nancy and the boy, as well as myself. I believe I'm going on, big. And I want you to believe it too. I couldn't do it unless you did believe it."

He was back with her again; they were together! She was so intensely, so ecstatically happy that for a moment she could hardly speak. This was the one word she had missed, had longed to hear—that he needed her; it was the one word which had been wanting, had made all else empty and thin. She flung up her head in a gesture of pride and confidence. "Of course I believe it!" she cried. "There isn't any risk,—there couldn't be,—with you! I'm right along with you, Walter, wherever you go."

Chapter Twelve

NANCY had been slow to tell Ariana that she too was to live in New York. She had been so dashed by the revelation of the limits of her father's income that she was uncertain of the best way to give Ariana her news, without leaving any loophole for Ariana's criticisms. When Ariana criticized, she did it by a series of standards about which Nancy knew little; and Nancy was supremely sensitive about her ignorance. But after the Christmas holidays the other Drochester girls at Haberton were talking about it, and Nancy didn't want Ariana to be told by anyone but herself, even if she did it all wrong.

Ariana had not gone home for the holidays—instead, a staid and stern great-aunt had appeared on the scene and taken her off to Canada for winter sports. Nancy was divided between pity for a girl whose parents thus blithely disposed of her and dispensed with her presence, and with envy because she felt that by doing the unusual Ariana had scored over all the rest of them with their family dinners, and gifts, and holiday dances and parties.

Not that Ariana lacked gifts, but they were unlike those of the other girls. There was a cigarette-case of woven gold in two shades from her mother; apple green and canary crêpe lounging pajamas with mules to match; a little pin of jade and brilliants for her hat; a vanity box of flowered enamel; and a very delicate perfume set—essence, toilet water, powder, bath salts, all in an individual scent, created for Ariana at her mother's behest, by a celebrated French maker of such luxuries. Beside these the hit-or-miss collections of lingerie, silk stockings, scarfs, bits of jewelry, handkerchiefs, trinket boxes and candy displayed by her classmates appeared dull and unimaginative. Nancy looked and envied. To be sure, her own things were a little better than the average; she had a bag which even Ariana called smart, an English sport sweater, and a pair of graceful slipper buckles; but they didn't, she knew, stack up with Ariana's.

"Bruce Ledge gave me those buckles," said

Nancy, displaying them. "Dad made a frightful row about it and wanted me to give them back, but Mother said I might keep them. Bruce is feeling so awfully blue about my going away to live—"

"Why, where are you going?" asked Ariana.

The moment of revelation had arrived. Nancy tried to look unconcerned. "Oh, didn't I tell you? We're moving to New York. Dad's to be vice-president of a bank down there."

Ariana sat up, straight and watchful. "What bank?"

"I believe it's the Rasten bank."

"Oh-h-h! That's quite a good bank. Mr. Copley Villiers is in it."

"I'm glad you approve of it," said Nancy, crushingly; "for otherwise, of course, Dad couldn't consider it."

"When are you going?" went on Ariana, taking not the least notice of the snub.

"The family's to leave very soon. And though I said everything, I've got to stick out the rest of the year and graduate."

"Where are you going to live—have you got a place?"

"Oh, yes," said Nancy, and named the address. "Mother simply took it for six months until she could look about and find something permanent. Dad wants to buy a house." This last was fiction, but she felt she might as well add on a bit.

"That's quite good," admitted Ariana. "I've a friend who lived there, Jane Byerly—she was at Miss Lakin's with me."

"Mother liked it," said Nancy. "She says it's quite high up, and has a wonderful view."

Ariana smiled. "People don't choose apartments for the view," she said.

"But I don't suppose they object to a good view, do they? Or is that—what's your favorite word—'not done'?"

"I don't know why you want to take that tone," said Ariana stiffly. "I should think you'd like me to tell you whatever I can."

"I should," admitted Nancy, "only you take quite a tone yourself—just as if nobody knew anything except you, and as if New York were Heaven and you were Saint Peter, ready to pass on whoever came in. Pretty poor line, I think."

THIS outburst cleared the air. "I didn't mean to be Saint Peterish," said Ariana. "I really didn't, Nancy. Don't be so severe with me."

"All right. Let's begin again." Nancy felt she had scored heavily. Ariana wouldn't have climbed down like that for anyone else, not even for the Ruggles. "Go ahead and tell me if you think I'll like New York."

Ariana considered this. "I don't know, Nancy. Have you any friends there, any relatives who can start you off?"

"Oh, I suppose Dad and Mother have some friends, but we haven't any relatives."

Ariana looked at her pityingly. "It's a darned shame your father and mother sent you to this school," she said. "Nobody here but me who can be of the least use to you! If they'd known they were going to live in New York, and had got you into Miss Lakin's, or Miss Genthe's, or the Plyarly or Edenton—then you'd have had a start. It's bad enough for a girl anyway, unless she's got an awfully old or well-known family, or simply quantities of money. You'll never land, unless it's by some simply unheard-of fluke!"

"I don't know what you mean." The two girls were talking quite naturally now; Nancy was willing to admit her lack of understanding.

"Well, you see, it's like this! As soon as a boy is born, he's put down for the best clubs; and by the time he's four or five, his name's entered for some really good prep school, and university. That gives him a start. And with a girl, while the club prob-

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lem isn't there, she must go into the right school from kindergarten. In that way she meets all the girls who're going to be débutantes, and if her mother's clever and entertains in the right way,—just enough, I mean, and doesn't overdo it,—why, when she comes out, she has friends, and she'll be included in everything that's going on *in her year*. And if she isn't included"—Ariana made a gesture of despair—"she might as well go in for acting or painting or music; or if she's plain, for good works. Something like that will be her only chance."

"Chance for what?"

"Don't be stupid, Nancy. It's her chance to be *in* things and have a good time, and to marry well."

Nancy sighed. "Yes, I see. It's pretty much the same in Drochester; there are always girls who never seem to be asked about much, or to get in on the nicest parties. And boys, too. But they have more luck, because everybody wants extra men at dances and parties."

"It's the truth," said Ariana. "Men have the best time in this world. They don't have to work to be popular. Honestly, the way some perfectly impossible boys behave—they know a girl must have a couple of stags to take about with her, or she's sure to have a thin time, and they make such a favor out of it! Of course it's not so bad at the subdeb parties, but I've heard stories from the older girls! And the competition from the young matrons is simply awful."

THE two worldly-wise young things shook their heads in naïve horror at the sorrows of the débutante. "My mother," Ariana went on, "had rather a horrid time at first—you know she went to this same school, which means nothing at all in New York, *nothing*—but she had my father's people to back her up, and I will say for Mother, she's worked very hard, and with lots of *sense*—used her head, and didn't try to force things. And as I'm the only child, she's simply concentrated on me. If I don't marry some one spectacular, she'll murder me!"

Nancy considered. "My mother isn't a bit like that," she said. "I don't believe she cares at all about—knowing people—or who I marry, except of course she wouldn't want me to marry anybody queer, or rotten, or dumb." She wondered if she might be disloyal, so hastened on. "Of course in Drochester we've always known everybody, and gone everywhere—but it isn't such an awfully big place."

"Well, you'll find New York big enough. And it's easy to know lots of people there, but *the* people, the ones who do *everything* and do it *first*—there aren't so very many, and there are thousands and thousands who are simply dying to know them, so they have to make it difficult or they'd be overrun, and there wouldn't be *anything* exclusive, anywhere. I don't mind telling you that I think Mother rather lost a trick by sending me out here—after I was expelled from Miss Lakin's, I mean. She should have sent me abroad, to some school in France or Italy. But the truth was, she didn't trust me, and she wanted to keep me somewhere where she could check up on me all the time." Nancy did not quite understand this; indeed, much of Ariana's wisdom floated over her head. But she could comprehend that here was an almost unattainable world, and being almost unattainable, was therefore most desirable.

"You don't even belong to the Junior League, do you?" asked Ariana.

"There isn't any in Drochester."

"You might as well be dead and buried as not to belong to the Junior League in New York. *Every* débutante enters their classes, every *one!* And most of them are elected. So they're sure of *some* invitations, and *some* publicity and some *standing*. You know, Nancy, if I were you, what I'd do? I'd make the most frightful scream about being left behind—I'd think up *some* way to go to New York with my family, and I'd get them to put me into a school there for this last half-year. You've no *idea* what a help it will be to you. This is purely disinterested on my part, dear, for this hole will be a howling wilderness without you. But for your own sake—your whole *future*—"

The two girls went into executive session. And two days later Walter Reyburn came up from the bank and called Effie away from her preliminary packing.

"I've had a letter from Nancy," he said. "Effie, I don't see how we can leave the child at Haberton. She says she's tried to be brave about it, but when she thinks of us being so far away from her for so long—"

"It's only until June," said Effie.

"But you know how interminable six months seem to a young thing like Nancy. She could just as well enter a school in New York, and be with us. I feel very much as she does, I'll admit."

"Let me see the letter."

"I'm sorry—I left it at the bank. But it was really touching. I see no special point in her graduating from Miss Ruggles'. I'd like to have my little girl with us. I didn't want to answer the letter until I'd talked to you, but I hate to deny her. Suppose she should get sick."

"She's very healthy, and they've an excellent infirmary," said Effie. "I don't like the idea of having her studies interrupted, now in her senior year. I'm afraid it'll be very unsettling to her to go into a new school, even if we can get her into one."

"There'll be no difficulty about that. And I'll be much easier in my mind if she's with us. For one thing, it'll get her entirely away from that Ledge boy's influence. And she can go on to school; she can live at home, and be a day pupil. I'd prefer that—I've never fancied these long absences from home. Let's take her with us, Effie. The family ought not to be divided."

"But I thought you didn't mind if James Terry went to boarding-school."

"Boys are different. I'd very much prefer to have James Terry in a school away from home, and Nancy with us. It's more natural."

Effie was tired; her mind was in confusion. It didn't seem to her at all a wise plan for Nancy, but she had never objected when Walter made a definite stand about either of the children. Besides, she knew his special close affection for Nancy.

She turned her mind deliberately to being reasonable. It would be very sweet to have Nancy with them, and very companionable for herself. And there were sure to be plenty of schools in New York where she could get as good training as at Haberton. Yet the toothache episode rose up in her memory, and she wondered if Nancy was trying another scheme. She wished she had seen the letter. She shifted the responsibility and took refuge in a domestic *cliché*. "You do whatever you think is best, Walter," she said.

Chapter Thirteen

IT was over, the farewell. It had actually happened. The house was rented, the furniture stored, the trunks filled with indispensables, and the life in Drochester was ended without, Effie thought, causing as huge a ripple as Walter believed. Walter talked so constantly about the excitement his going had caused, he had emphasized so strongly his star rôle in settling Parkinson's affairs, that a casual listener, uninformed, might have imagined Drochester's entire financial and commercial activity in temporary paralysis. But Effie had observed no such dénouement.

But at last they were on their way. They actually arrived! They skittered through the

streets of New York in a shivering mist and took possession of their new apartment. McNab and James Terry instantly hated it. Nancy exclaimed with exuberant enthusiasm which was as trying to Effie's frayed nerves as James Terry's distaste. "I think it's *too* darling," she kept saying. "I've always *longed* to live in a place like this. Oh, I must write to Manie about that *exotic* bathroom!"

Effie ordered breakfast from the restaurant, observed that the check was appalling, and set herself sternly to the task of arranging such pictures, books, china and linen as they had brought from home. She would have much preferred to sit down and have a good cry. But there was far too much to be done. She had found a school near by in Connecticut for James Terry, and she meant to take him there at once, and let him feel himself once more in a fixed orbit. She knew that much of his depression came from losing his own defined and customary way.

And then there was Nancy's school to be sought—she had been unable to do anything about this by letter. And she must get a cook and a maid, and start the wheels of the household machine. If Walter only would take more interest, if he would only listen—but he wanted her to listen to what he was doing, what he proposed to do. "I know what kind of appendage I am," thought Effie. "I am a large attentive Ear, and nothing more!"

SHE stiffened into a semblance of self-reliance, reminded herself that she had wanted a big job, and having had it thrust upon her it would be ignominious if she failed in its mere beginning. This carried her along fairly well, until James Terry was gone and settled. He had liked the school from the first instant, quite against his will, but he had been sporting enough to admit it. "There's something about this place," he said, "that makes me feel better. The head master is O. K. And the athletic field is simply swell."

This he said before Effie left him, and the cheer of it carried her back to the city determined to do as well by Nancy. But this was not so easy. With a list of three schools recommended by Miss Ruggles, and two more added later with a question-mark, Effie ran head on into the queer high walls of social snobbery which surrounded these institutions. Head mistresses with refined and exact voices talked with her at length, and managed to convey the impression that no young girl without a towering family tree, a place in the very center of society's sunshine, an incalculable fortune, and an impeccable record for behavior was ever received within their doors. At last the chance mention of the name of Mr. Copley Villiers, Chairman of the Board of Walter's bank, was the magic sesame which gave entrance to one of the two less desirable schools. Effie didn't like it; she thought the school pretentious, and there was a general atmosphere of veneer and varnish which distressed her. For a wild moment she contemplated putting Nancy into the hands of private tutors, or entering her for special courses at Columbia. But Nancy rebelled at this. Ariana had so fixed in her mind the necessity of six months in a smart finishing school that she insisted on it on the plea that it would be less lonely for her. This seemed reasonable, and with some misgivings, Effie let her do as she wished. The bill for the six months was exactly the same as Miss Ruggles' for a year, and there was a list of extras which mounted like smoke to the sky. Effie's balance in the bank was wholly obliterated.

Everything about their new life was appallingly expensive. Servants, supplies, laundry were all fifty to seventy per cent higher than they had been in Drochester. And she found that without constant and lavish tipping of the apartment-house attendants she

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could not count on regular mail or package delivery, the transmission of messages, or any small service which should have been almost automatic.

"We were never so poor," she told Walter. "I'd like to get along with one maid, but I've discovered that a good cook wont come to a place without a second girl."

"What's the deficit?" he asked. When she told him, he raised astonished brows. "I've been spending a lot myself," he said. "Burton's put me up for the Bankers' Club, and a lunch club of men who're advantageous to know; and Tellwyn—he's another director—was talking about golf clubs. And I dare say you've realized that we've no car."

"Nancy mentions it about ten times a day," said Effie. "But—I don't believe we can afford one."

"That's ridiculous. Why, in Drochester we had two."

"But we had our own garage, and we drove them ourselves—and neither one was what we need here. I've looked into it. Upkeep, garage charges and a chauffeur will be about thirty-five hundred a year—exclusive of the cost of the car itself."

Walter whistled. "Are you sure?"

"I am all too sure. I was thinking—why not hire one, just when we need it, and use taxies ordinarily?"

"Why, Effie, every family in this apartment-house has its own car, some several. We'll look like cheap skates if we don't get one."

"Look like cheap skates to whom? The door-man and the elevator boys? Somehow that doesn't bother me a bit. Oh, Walter, I did hope—"

"What now?"

"I hoped that the one thing we'd gain when we left Drochester might be to stop living in competition! Mr. Bishop said New York was impersonal. I hoped it was impersonal enough so that what other people had wouldn't be a measure for us. You're making three times as much as you did in Drochester, and we ought to be able to save a lot of it, invest it—"

Walter laughed, a twisted sort of laugh. "Things don't go that way here. I've simply got to make more money until we can get the things we want. That's the New York spirit."

"It's not mine," said Effie. "And it's not sane."

WALTER walked to the window that gave the great view of the city towering below and around them, spread into an enormous rigid map of steel and stone and brick.

"New York isn't sane, Effie," he said slowly. "New York's mad and unnatural and hard and powerful. It does something queer to the people in it; it twists their brains, and I think it ossifies their souls. Even the little time we've been here, the stuff I've seen go through that bank—well! But don't you care—I'm equal to it. I'm going right on—up. And now, speaking practically, I'll give you two-thirds of the ready money I have, and you spread it where it'll do the most good. And I'll look into this matter of the car myself. And by the way—you were speaking of Bishop. I saw him this morning, and he wants to ask us to dinner. He said he'd write you."

"That would be awfully nice. I like Mr. Bishop. Walter—it seems odd Tate Gresham hasn't called up or been to see us."

"He's abroad, went for the holidays just before we came. Didn't I tell you? He'll be back shortly; then we'll get hold of him and have a party. It'll put old Tate's eyes out to see us living here—you did a fine day's work when you rented this place, Effie. Even Copley Villiers had a good word for it."

Nancy came in at the moment and heard the name. "Oh, Father—you and Mother ought to get to know the Villiers some way or other. They're exactly the right sort. I don't believe Mr. Gresham is much—don't bother with him. But Margery Villiers will be a next-season débutante, and she'd be lots of use to me if I could meet her. I suppose I might manage it myself through Ariana, but I'd rather get to know her myself; Ariana'd have more respect for me, and be more likely to do something for me."

"I don't believe we can choose our friends with a sole eye to your social success, Nancy," said Effie. "We're not that kind."

"But Mother, you ought to be," said Nancy. "Ariana told me that her mother planned and organized and worked for her social success from the day she was born. Of course she's had a great advantage over you; she's been here in New York for years, and Mr. Wood's family has helped her, and they have heaps of money. But you're awfully clever, and when it's my whole future that's at stake— Don't you want me to have what other girls have, and do what they do? If you'd get to know the Villiers, and two or three other really *good* families, I might get a start in the débutante set next year, and once let me have a start, I'll do the rest."

"By George, she's got the right idea, Effie. Nancy's got ambition, like me. She's satisfied with nothing but the best." Walter put his arm around Nancy and drew her to him. "Just give your mother a little time, Nancy; she's been having a pretty hectic session up until now. You know we both want you to have what other girls have, and we're out to get it for you."

"I've looked over the school pretty carefully," said Nancy, encouraged by her father's approval, "and there are only two or three girls who amount to much. I'm making friends with them; I'm going to ask them here to tea some Saturday, if it's all right with you, Mother, and take them to a matinée first—if Dad'll buy the tickets, for I'm broke. Then they'll have to entertain me, and I'll get into their homes, and meet their people."

"Nancy," said Effie slowly, "if you were not my own dear child, and if I didn't know you so well, I'd call you a horrid scheming little climber."

"I think maybe I am one," said Nancy. "But everybody chooses their friends for what they want out of them, maybe to listen to their music, or for their pleasant talk, or because they're clever, or amusing, or sweet. It's no worse to choose them because they can give you a good time socially, is it? I can't see that it is."

"That's a sound argument," said Walter, chuckling. "Nancy, my child, you've got a head on your shoulders."

EFFIE said no more. She was overwhelmed with a sense of the division of her family, of its change into beings far from her, and alien. She had felt it first in Walter—and now in Nancy. And there was the eternal question, which wavered back and forth teasingly in her mind, as to whether they were perhaps right and she wrong. She was resolved to be open-minded, largely tolerant, blind to everything save the sharpest issues. But she could not help a sneaking conviction that there ought to be no need for her thus to resolve.

It was with these emotions at conflict within her that she went to Mr. Bishop's dinner; but since it was her first New York party she gradually forgot everything except a pleased expectancy. They drove far downtown on the East Side, to a quiet and shaded square, and entered an ancient high-shouldered brownstone house guarded by two stone lions, as sleepy-looking as Mr. Bishop himself.

In the reception-room there was a rosy carpet, lit by candles and a Franklin stove. Prints of old New York covered the walls; the furniture was of the date of the prints.

The only modern notes were the trig gray taffeta maid who took Effie's coat, and the utterly English butler who had opened the door. The Reyburns passed on into the drawing-room, and Mr. Bishop led them up to a straight white-haired little old lady. "My mother," he said; and she gave them a tiny hand sparkling with diamonds.

"I am particularly glad to meet you, my dear," she said to Effie. "My son says you are a remarkable woman, and he is never mistaken. My son has an analytic mind."

"I thought Mr. Bishop remarkable," said Effie, "and now I think so more than ever."

Mr. Bishop at her elbow replied for himself. "You are quite mistaken," he said. "I am a very dull chap to everyone but myself. I never bore myself, because I have a hobby."

"And what is it?" cried Effie.

He drew her along to meet the other guests. "You are remarkable enough to find out for yourself," he said.

THE party was evidently for ten. An elderly ponderous man with an overblown, overdressed but impressively confident wife—these were Judge and Mrs. Mathison. An athletic youth with a wave of fair hair across a poetic brow was presented as Rascoe Blaine, the playwright. Another couple, Mr. and Mrs. Pressley, were about the Reyburns' own ages, and style. Effie liked Mrs. Pressley at once; she looked friendly and simple and agreeable. But this left their number one short. There was a pause.

"Lora is always late," said Mrs. Bishop. "I told her seven-thirty instead of eight, for only in that way can I be sure that we will have dinner by eight-fifteen."

There was a stir at the door, and a woman made a deliberate studied entrance. She was any age from twenty to forty, very slender; her round head was black and sleek; there was much blue make-up around her eyes, and the rest of her face white except for violently scarlet lips. She wore a thin black dress, with a black cape lined with the exact red of her lipstick, dropping off her very bare shoulders. She had slippers of the same red, with huge brilliant buckles. Fantastically long diamond earrings and a half-dozen showy diamond bracelets on her right arm completed the extraordinary ensemble. "Aunt Tiny," she said, "you're just a wicked old liar. You almost made me be on time!"

"My niece Lora Evans," said Mrs. Bishop. "You know everyone, Lora, except Mrs. Reyburn—and Mr. Reyburn."

Rascoe Blaine rushed forward to kiss Lora's languid hand. "I'm to take you down, lovely creature. Oh, you're more uniquely beautiful than ever," he said gushingly. The others spoke with less enthusiasm. In fact, Mrs. Mathison hardly spoke at all. She looked angrily at Lora, moved her lips and gave her a half-inch nod.

But Lora Evans nodded toward Mrs. Mathison no more than an eighth of an inch, and her indifference was as marked as the other's anger. The whole atmosphere of the room quickened and livened, and Effie noticed how, with one accord, every man present followed, though not so intensely, the lead of young Blaine toward the woman in red and black. Except indeed Mr. Bishop. He had come toward Effie, and was offering his arm. "My mother likes the old-fashioned procession in to dinner," he said. "So if you will honor me—"

There was an instant's pause, however, occasioned by Mrs. Evans. She had refused to go down with young Blaine. "No, Aunt Tiny," she said, "I'm going to have Mr. Reyburn, though I know you meant him for yourself. But I hear he's a coming great man, and I adore great men."

Effie could have laughed; it was so raw and crude, even by Drochester standards. If this red-and-black creature only knew how many other more attractive women had tried

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St. and No.....

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flattery on Walter, and how Walter himself loathed that sort of thing, as well as excessive make-up! At least he was in for a grand ride, if Lora went on at her present speed!

She looked up into Mr. Bishop's dull but curiously penetrating eyes and saw in them such pitying sympathy that she was startled. Why—why should Mr. Bishop pity her? Did he imagine that Walter, her very own, her very dear Walter, who loved her, and whom she loved, would be captivated by anything so utterly false, so utterly, coarsely female? She could think of nothing to say, but put her hand on Mr. Bishop's arm and moved off with him in silence.

The dinner was long, exceedingly formal, and served with much ceremony and old-fashioned elegance. The table itself, with its epergne and candelabra of massive ornate silver was a lesson in the styles of fifty years before. The food and wine were alike marvelous. There had been no cocktails, and they would have been out of place, but there was a fine Chablis with the oysters, a dry tawny sherry with the soup, and later a champagne such as Effie had never before tasted.

"My mother likes to entertain in this mid-Victorian manner," said Mr. Bishop, "and it rather pleases me also. It is so different from the parties of my friends.

"I like it," Effie replied, "but I must confess that I have the feeling of being an actress in a delightful play rather than a guest at a modern dinner."

"But that is exact. I feel it also, though I am accustomed to it. Tell me, how are you getting on?"

Down the table Effie could see Mrs. Evans cooing up into Walter's face. Oddly, he didn't seem bored or disgusted. But he was too well-mannered to show it.

"I haven't quite got my bearings yet. I'm still fathoms deep, but I'm holding my breath and may come up in time. Do tell me about your cousin—I'm sure she isn't mid-Victorian."

Mr. Bishop's imperturbable smile took on a slight grimness.

"Ah, yes—Lora. She's had rather a hard time: married when she was very young, and the chap died after a year or so. As she had no money, she went into business."

"She is much too decorative for a business woman," said Effie silkily. "Do tell me what she does."

Mr. Bishop's smile was now unmistakably grim. "She has gone into the business of getting as much as possible out of life with the smallest return from herself. And incidentally, she is an interior decorator."

"And is she successful in these two occupations—or should I call them arts?"

"She is fairly successful in both." The smile became more kind. "She diverts my mother—her father was my mother's youngest brother, and her favorite. My mother has much family feeling."

It was exactly as if he had also said: "I think she's a minx; I detest her; I have no family feeling whatever; but—if my mother wants Lora here, Lora is to come." Effie found that she liked Mr. Bishop more every minute. But she was not unaware that Mrs. Evans kept up her talk with Walter alone, neglecting completely young Rascoe Blaine.

AT the end of the dinner the ladies left the table together, and led by Mrs. Bishop returned to the stately drawing-room. Mrs. Evans gave them a comprehensive glance of boredom and indifference. "If you don't mind, Aunt Tiny," she said, "I'll just run to the telephone a minute. I rushed off so madly this evening I hadn't time for two very important calls." Without waiting for permission, she vanished.

"She wont come back until the men appear," said Mrs. Mathison in a ponderous aside to Effie.

"That will suit me perfectly," said Effie, and Mrs. Mathison was surprised into a gasping chuckle. Mrs. Bishop sat down by the fire and fell into a nap, and so the other three gathered at the end of the room.

"Lora Evans grows more brassy every year she lives," whispered Mrs. Mathison. "I can't imagine why dear Mrs. Bishop has her here among her friends. I heard yesterday that she was going to be sued by her dressmaker—she hasn't paid her a nickel for three years. And look at her clothes! She goes to Maggy Burt!"

Mrs. Pressley and Effie exchanged nervous glances. "Isn't this a delightful house?" said Effie. "I've never seen anything like it."

"It's one of the few New York homes in the old style still remaining," said Mrs. Pressley, snatching at the topic. "It's perfect. Mrs. Bishop wont have a thing changed, and I hope she never will."

"She's poor as a church mouse," went on Mrs. Mathison firmly, "and has no more business going to Maggy Burt than flying to the moon. I suppose she thinks the Bishops wont let her actually be brought into court, or else she imagines she'll find some fool of a man she can get something out of." She looked with meaning at Effie. "She almost persuaded the Judge to buy an old Spanish cathedral choir-stall—a choir-stall, mind you—to put in his office! She only wanted to charge him twenty-five hundred for it, and out of that her commission would probably have been twenty-four hundred. Well, I stopped *that*." Her whisper became sepulchrally low. "They say Fred Dearman has broken with her."

"Mrs. Bishop is waking," said Effie, and advanced to their hostess, determined to make her statement true if it wasn't. But it was. The little old lady sat up, brightened, refreshed. She did not know she had been asleep.

THE men came in, and immediately Lora Evans followed. Whether or not she had been telephoning, Effie did not know, but she did know that she had certainly accentuated and deepened her make-up. She fastened herself again upon Walter, and drew him into a corner.

The Mathisons soon rose to go. "Do you play contract?" Mrs. Mathison asked Effie. "I'll call you up soon. I'm devoted to it."

Effie was more pleased when Mrs. Pressley asked for her address. "Perhaps you'll join our Lenten sewing-class," she said. "It meets on four Wednesdays in Lent; we sew for one of the hospitals. I'll have an invitation sent to you."

Effie wondered if she would have to summon Walter from the determined siren's side, but Mr. Bishop saved her. He joined them; and somehow, a moment later, they were all in a general group. Rascoe Blaine went over to Lora. "You'll drive uptown with me, Lora, wont you?" asked the young playwright pathetically. "You'll grant me that boon, wont you?"

"Oh, Rascoe—these sweet people are taking me with them," said Mrs. Evans, waving herself toward Walter and Effie.

Mr. Bishop once more interposed. "You must stay and talk to Mother for a few minutes, Lora," he said. "I'll send you home in the car."

Lora shrugged. "I suppose that's an order, Clarence."

"Not at all. But Mother wants specially to see you."

Effie knew it was an order, and that Lora Evans wouldn't dare disobey. Also, with Mrs. Mathison's gossip in her ears, she had an idea that it was Mr. Bishop, not his mother, who wished to talk to Lora. She was glad to be spared her presence, and lost no time in saying good night. The butler had a taxi waiting for them. "Ought I to tip him?" Walter muttered, hesitating.

"Certainly," she replied, adding, after the

man had pocketed the half-dollar Walter offered him, and the taxi had started: "I don't believe there's anyone in New York who wont take a tip. And now," she went on, "for heaven's sake tell me what you and that extraordinary Mrs. Evans were talking about all evening. I'm perishing of curiosity."

"She is extraordinary, isn't she? Awfully interesting woman! And so beautiful."

"Beautiful!" cried Effie, not believing her ears. "You thought she was beautiful! And you've always said that a lot of make-up made you sick!"

"It suits her type," Walter explained with some stiffness. "Most women don't know how to use make-up. And she was perfectly frank about it—she told me nobody would ever give her a second glance without paint." He laughed with that indulgence of feminine foibles which is so irritating for a wife to listen to. But Effie withheld her comment. She wished to hear more.

"She has a keen business head, too," Walter continued. "She told me all about her work. She's a decorator, Effie, and she's made a specialty of doing offices. She says it's very much an unworked field, as yet. She's done the offices of some of the biggest men in Wall Street. You'll have to get her to help you when we move out of this furnished apartment."

"We aren't going to move into a Wall Street office," said Effie—she could not help it.

"She knows ever so many people it would be a good thing for us to know," pursued Walter, to Effie's gibe. "I was telling her about Nancy, and what we want to do for her next season, and she was full of clever suggestions. Let's have her to dinner and talk things over with her, Effie. You've no idea how much you can learn from her."

"How did you like the Mathisons?" asked Effie, assuming deafness of her own. "And the Pressleys? I thought Mrs. Pressley was a dear. Who are they, did you know?"

"You bet I know. Mathison's one of the smartest old-line lawyers down town. And Pressley's a partner in Grove and Dale, the big bond-house. They're all good people to know in a way, solid, substantial, like the Bishops; but they're not much socially."

"Did Mrs. Evans tell you that?"

"Why, yes, she did." His surprise was so genuine that Effie wanted to laugh. She caught hold of his hand and laid it against her cheek.

"Walter," she said, "you are a darling, and I love you. Don't let this Mrs. Evans person fascinate you away from me, will you? She'd do it if you'd let her." She meant it to be facetious; she wasn't at all in earnest, and she fully expected him to give her a good hug and say: "Fat chance, old dear."

INSTEAD, he laughed self-consciously. "Don't be so provincial, Effie," he replied.

Effie's anger and resentment flashed into words: "I'm not provincial enough to be taken in by a lot of cheap flattery from a vamp out of the comic strip!" Instantly she was horrified, not at what she had said, but by the feeling which backed it. To speak like this to Walter! To *Walter!* Moreover, she had great difficulty not to say much more, much worse.

There was a blank horrible silence in the cab. Walter looked straight ahead of him, his face set. At the apartment door they got silently out and went upstairs, still at this strained unnatural distance. Then Effie made some slight comment on the dinner, and Walter answered, and they exchanged a few more inconsequential remarks. But they went to bed at last with the slaps they had dealt each other still smarting, neither of them willing to say: "I was rude; I was wrong; I was unkind."

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"SING FOR YOUR SUPPER"

(Continued from page 41)

to be lonely ones; and even going out, with Kerry, she could have quiet evenings. He liked to dine where there wasn't a band—though he loved dancing.

"Food?" he would inquire—meaning *food*, not merely dinner. "Or amusement?"

Sometimes he would decide without consulting her at all. "Don't dress," he would command her, over the telephone. "We'll go to Luigi's for dinner—and you're to be home and in bed and asleep by eleven-thirty. Hear? Because you've been dashing around altogether too much."

He was proprietary; he even bossed her. It was delightful. Celia had made up her mind for herself, for so long. She who was shrewd and capable and efficient from nine until half-past five, enjoyed being helpless, being *little*, in the evenings. She was the meek one then. She meekly did as she was told; and when she didn't, it was so Kerry would scold her.

Among other things, he insisted that, on the evenings when they were not together, Celia ring him up and say good night when she came in. This was in no sense a jealous watchfulness on his part; nor did he evince the slightest curiosity or interest as to how, where and with whom she had spent the hours. He said he just wanted to be sure that she was all right; and there was no doubting him.

WHEN she was very late he never questioned her. But when, after a night-club or an expedition to Harlem, she was so late that she didn't call him at all, hating to disturb him, he was immensely disturbed next time she saw him.

"But it was four o'clock!" Celia would protest. She would laugh a little. "Waking you up out of a sound sleep at four o'clock to say good night seems so *silly!*"

"Not to me," Kerry stated concisely.

He had said several times: "Of course, if it's a burden, I don't want you to do it, Celia—"

"It's not a burden!" Celia said. "It's—precious."

In appearance Kerry was becoming to her. He was dark as she was blonde, with heavy black eyebrows and wet dark hair made corduroy by a comb. He was of more than medium height, with the physique of an athlete who is agile rather than mighty—a half-back rather than a guard. In point of fact he had not played football. He had had only one year, and a semester of the third year afterward, of college. The rest had been machine-guns and mud.

He was thirty-two. The firm of Parker, Sylvester and Payne, landscape architects, would presently become the firm of Parker, Sylvester, Payne and McDonald. In the meantime Kerry was working harder than a man should work—though only by the results was this fact known. He always seemed to have plenty of leisure; he never seemed hurried or harassed. He was one of those busy people who conserve their energy by forbearing to make any public show of it.

He had an apartment on Central Park South; and nearly all the evenings that he did not spend with Celia he spent there. He was almost always in when she telephoned him, early or late. Celia might, or might not, have liked to think that he stayed at home to be at her beck and call. She couldn't think it. He spoke of working at home just often enough to dispel any such idea. He was out—unexpectedly out—just often enough.

They had met during the previous summer, and for half a year Kerry had been an intermittent escort, like another—only rather nicer. Celia from the first had been attracted by his good looks, by the suggestion of inner strength and dependability there was about him, beneath his spontaneity and ease; and also, oddly enough, by the fact that his hands were exactly like Roger's. She did not know why this recommended him, but it did. She supposed it was because, after watching the hands for a minute or two, glancing up was always a soothing small surprise.

From the first she had found herself able to tell Kerry things—all kinds of things: to confide in him, to ask his advice about money, and about men. He was amazingly responsible and sympathetic, and wonderfully wise. When she had known him less than two months and seen him only four or five times, she cried on his shoulder one midnight in a taxi—cried like a child, out of sheer fatigue and because her slippers were tight. Kerry held her gently. He did not say: "Don't cry." He did not ask why she was crying. He just held her.

Celia thought she had never known anything so sweet.

She could accept eleventh-hour invitations, if they were Kerry's. She need not even bother to invent a previous engagement, adding: "But I'll break it." If she had one, she broke it anyway. This during their progress toward the companionship that now existed. Sometime during the winter just past—*when* was vague—they had become as they were now. Celia dated it from her discovery that she could telephone Kerry of an evening without hesitation or qualm and say: "I'm alone and I'm bored to death. *Do* something about it!"

THIS was all quite perfect. What Celia called the catch in it did not at first appear—though when it did, she thought she had been very obtuse indeed not to have known that it was there. She might, she thought, have foreseen that people, seeing her so often with Kerry, were going to infer that she preferred him to all other men in the world. It was true, of course, in a way; but not in the way of their inference.

People, thought Celia, were fools. As if you couldn't have a favorite of the opposite sex who was neither your *fiancé* nor your lover! Men especially were fools. Here were Kerry's competitors—the dinner-companions and dancing-partners—bowing and retiring, not waiting to be dismissed. In fact, taking themselves off pell-mell, for fear they might be.

It was quite plain. In these days of the spring her swains who had never heard of Kerry were faithful and importunate as ever. But the ones who knew him, or knew of him, phoned no more.

She said sadly to Kerry: "I suppose I've got to stop going around with you so much. I suppose that's the only thing to do."

Kerry looked at her thoughtfully.

"All right," he said.

"I mean," said Celia, "I can't lose all the other men friends I have. I can't afford to."

"No."

"You understand, don't you, Kerry?" Celia said anxiously. "It isn't as if I were ever going to marry, or anything. And as long as I'm not, I've simply got to have people to take me places. I mean, it would be so foolish of me to—to put all my dates in one basket. You see that, don't you?"

"Quite," said Kerry.

And the next time she rang him up to say good night, he was not there.

This was the next evening. She had driven out the Post Road to dine and dance with one Jack Pierre, a young man about town who owned two dinner-jackets, a portable bar, and a low long yellow car like a sort of solidified hammock on wheels—very giddy and rapid. These possessions expressed Pierre. He belonged to them. He was a handsome and worthless person, a broker by trade, a born drinker. He had been divorced twice. He called Celia "Gorgeous" as a nickname. "Hello, Gorgeous!" He probably called all pretty women that.

Celia had not known him very long, and she did not like him very well. Early this evening, before ever they reached the Inn on the Post Road, she had said to herself: "I wish I hadn't come." Pierre had been to three cocktail parties, he reported with pride, since five o'clock. He drove insanely all the way out, and drank rye highballs all during dinner. Dancing with him was both difficult and conspicuous, but he would dance.

On the way back Celia had gripped the door of the car till her fingers ached, and wondered what all the motorcycle policemen in Westchester County were doing. Now, when they were so badly needed, for once there wasn't a one. She almost prayed for a whistle, for a gruff, sarcastic voice: "In a hurry, aint you? Yeah. I thought so." But she knew that arrest would be worse than unfortunate, under the circumstances.

Finally she prayed simply to get home.

SHE called Kerry's number before she took off her hat and coat. She was still nerve-racked, still white and shaken. She wanted to cry: "Oh, *Ker*-ry! Oh, I've had the most awful *time!*" And tell him about it. And hear him say, as only Kerry could: "I'm so sorry, darling. But it's all right now, you know. It's all over now."

The remote repeated sound on the wire that meant he was not there to answer was surprising, and unkind. Until it had sounded six or eight times, she refused to accept its dictum. Kerry would answer. He *couldn't* be out, when she wanted him there so badly!

She signaled the operator with an impatient forefinger.

"Operator! What number are you calling? I want—"

She hung up finally, and undressed, eying the clock on her bedside table meanwhile. It was midnight. Queer, his being out. They had talked on the telephone at six o'clock, and he hadn't mentioned any engagement. Funny.

"He isn't *angry* at me, is he?" Celia thought. "Annoyed, because I told him—Oh, no, of course he's not. Kerry doesn't get mad. It isn't anything like that."

She tried his number again when she was ready for bed. No answer. She could not sleep; and at intervals of half an hour at first, then of fifteen minutes, she kept trying his number. It was absurd; it was adolescent; and she was ashamed of herself. But she could not help it. His absence was the thing now that was keeping her awake. Where was he? Why didn't he go home?

Each time she called she was prepared to say, for her pride's sake: "Did I wake you? I just this minute got in."

Sometime after three o'clock, exhaustion triumphed over her mind's unease, and she slept at last, not having talked to Kerry. She was wan and lackadaisical in the morning.

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and tired all day. "This," she told herself severely, "is what I get for acting like a schoolgirl. For heaven's sake, as if it *mattered* where he was! He's just a friend."

Late in the afternoon Kerry telephoned.

"Did you have a good time last night?" he inquired.

"Yes," said Celia. "Did you?" She added: "I called you when I came in—about three o'clock—but there was no answer."

"About three?" Kerry repeated in a tone of surprise. "I thought I was in before then."

That was all he said.

There was a short pause; then, to her astonishment and consternation, Celia suddenly asked: "But where were you?"

Kerry had never asked her that, in all these months. Appalled, she followed the question the next instant with a little deprecatory laugh. "Oh, I'm sorry," she said. "I didn't mean to seem inquisitive, Kerry—I'm just making conversation."

"Of course," he agreed.

He told her where he had been: a dinner place, a night-club, another night-club. He did not say with whom. He said simply "we." Celia had just about decided that he was attempting in puerile fashion to excite some jealousy in her, when he wound up by saying: "It was all rather dull."

Then she thought: "If it was dull, why did it last till three o'clock? Dull, my eye! He had a grand time!"

IN the ensuing days she didn't know what to think about Kerry. Certainly he was different; certainly their relations were different; and undeniably this was because of her recent ultimatum. What Celia found herself unable to determine was whether Kerry was trying to hurt her, or trying to help her. He kept himself out of her way, these days: was that to teach her a lesson? Or was it to give all her other men friends a chance? Punishment—or friendly coöperation? Or what? What *was* this?

Whatever it was, she didn't like it at all.

He was almost never at hand when she needed him, now. His evening engagements were so numerous, and this was so unusual, that she thought: "I was right. He just hopes he's making me worry." As long as she could think this, she was not worried, but quite complacent, musing fondly: "Isn't he cunning?"

But when Kerry chanced to remark that he was spending these evenings at the office, working, she could no longer believe that he meant to upset her. Then she did worry. Was he really working? Or wasn't he? Why at the office, all of a sudden, instead of at home? And moreover and furthermore, if he was working at the office these evenings, then why was it that nobody—these evenings—answered the office telephone?

"He's lying to me," Celia thought. "He's being attentive to somebody else, and he just doesn't want me to know."

By dint of heroic self-control she refrained from interrogating him. She must not give him that satisfaction, ever again. She must pretend she didn't mind, or notice. But to herself she could no longer pretend. She missed him dreadfully.

Now the loneliness of evenings alone was like nothing she had ever experienced, having novel fears and speculations added to it. Sometimes she thought if she could not find Kerry—at once—and talk to him, she would lose her mind. It was impossible to stay away from the telephone. There was recurrently the feeling that he *must* be there "by now."

When she went out, she was *distraite* and restive. She always suggested dining at one or another of the restaurants Kerry liked; but she always seemed to pick the wrong one. She ate little, and smoked incessantly. Her eyes wandered, and often she did not hear what her escort said.

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"H-m-m?" she would inquire, without interest.

It usually turned out that they had said: "Why so quiet?" Or, "What's the trouble, Celia?" Or the insufferable: "Penny for your thoughts!" Aggrievedly and reproachfully, they said these things. They were disappointed in her, displeased, but it did not matter. *Let* them be. Let them go away and never call her up again. She wouldn't care.

One of them—one who knew Kerry, and who had foresworn her society lately—said to her that it was wonderful to be seeing her again, after all these weeks.

He said: "I'm certainly glad you're back in circulation, old thing." And he queried: "What happened, anyway?"

"What do you mean, 'what happened'?" Celia said coldly.

"Well—of course it's no business of mine, but—you and Kerry were engaged or something, weren't you?"

Celia's denial was listless. "Un-uh," she said merely, with a negative motion of her head. [illegible] would. After a minute she said, "No more so than we are now!"—not understanding why she said that, quite.

The expression on the face of her *vis-à-vis* changed perceptibly. "Oh, I see," he said. "So it *isn't* all over?"

"Certainly not!" Celia heard herself snap at him. "Where did you ever get such a weird idea? Of course it isn't!"

Which, from a young woman who less than a month ago had complained that she couldn't afford to lose her other men friends, was rather strange.

SHE made it worse. They finished dinner that evening at ten o'clock, and she asked to be taken home. She mentioned a sore throat and an early business appointment the next morning. She did not expect to be believed, nor was she; and the skepticism in her escort's mind no doubt became conviction when, passing through Central Park South on the taxi-ride toward her own apartment, Celia abruptly said: "Alan—do you mind very much letting me out here? I want to run up and say hello to Kerry just a minute."

She had seen that the lights in his fifth-floor living-room were on. She had wished to be driven this way, so that she might see.

"You don't mind, do you?" she repeated, as the taxi stopped. She patted Alan's sleeve. Conciliatory tone and gesture were habit merely. It wasn't important whether he minded, any more than it was important what he thought, or what he went away and said to people.

"I've had a lovely time," she informed him absently, on the pavement—adding, as she seemed to be planning to conduct her into the building: "Don't bother to wait—unless you want to. I know he's there."

It was not until Alan in his taxi had departed (to be seen no more) and she was pressing Kerry's bell, that it occurred to her that he might not be alone. She stood her ground. If he had guests,—or a guest,—all Kerry would have to do was say so. Then she would know. Then, at last, she would know *some*thing.

"Celia," she announced, rather faintly, when Kerry's inquiring voice called through the tube. "Are you terribly busy?"

Kerry replied, with what sounded like immense joy and gratification, that he wasn't busy at all, and this was great, and to "jump right up here."

"The place is a shambles," he said. "You'll have to forgive it—"

He met her in the fifth-floor hall. The minute the self-operating elevator stopped, its outer door was opened and its inner one slid aside with a crash, and there he was: Kerry, picturesque and dark and smiling. She had not seen him for a week. It seemed to her that he had grown bigger.

"Hello, Kerry!" she said.

She was proud of her voice that remained so usual, while her heart did a most unusual giddy thing. She left the elevator, assisted by Kerry's left hand, which reached for and drew her out by the wrist—snatched her out, in effect.

"Glad to see me?" she said, because he so obviously was.

"*Am* I! It's been a couple of decades—"

"Hasn't it!" Celia said easily.

In the little vacant hall that was lined with lettered doors Kerry turned her gently around to face the light.

"Let me look at you," he said—and looked at her, quizzically, one eyebrow raised. Celia suffered his smiling scrutiny in silence. She smiled back; and wished she had had a minute with a mirror, before this happened.

Kerry said, scowling now: "You haven't been getting slee[illegible]nough!"

"Oh, heavens, in the *[illegible]ow* it?"

"No, but I [illegible]ood looks, [illegible]"

With one finger under her chin, he tilted her face up. Now his eyes were sober;—they were not laughing any more.

"Been having a wonderful time, have you?"

"Yes," she said, and then: "No, not very."

"That's fine."

"I've missed you a lot."

"That's *fine!*"

"You've been neglecting me—"

"By request."

"Well, stop it!" Celia cried. "I don't like it a bit!"

"Splendid!" crowed Kerry.

The laughter was back in his eyes now, and on his lips. He said unexpectedly: "Now that that's settled—why don't you marry me?"

Celia's lashes curled back on her eyelids in instant startled protest. Then she too laughed. "I haven't changed my mind about that, of course," she said matter-of-factly.

"Maybe I shouldn't have mentioned it," murmured Kerry.

He still grinned broadly, as if at some private little joke of his own. "What?" Celia wanted to know.

"Nothing—just elation, because you're here."

ALL this in the hall. They had been too absorbed in each other and in their reunion to move a step. Now Kerry remarked their loitering, and they started unhastily toward his door that stood hospitably open at the end. Celia as they went remembered to explain her call a little.

"I was having dinner with the most disagreeable little creature—some one you know, but no one you like—"

She was still talking lightly when she crossed the threshold and entered the familiar living-room. The confusion that there met her eyes checked her voice abruptly, and Kerry behind her said: "I warned you the place was all pulled to piece—"

It was. The curtains and draperies were down; the floor was bare of rugs, the bookshelves empty. On the walls small hollow nail-holes held up rectangles of dust; the pictures were piled together in a chair. All the furniture huddled in the center of the floor, and books lay in heaps everywhere. And through the door ajar of the bedroom beyond, a similar devastation was visible.

"What on earth—" began Celia. "What are you *doing*, Kerry? Moving?"

Kerry closed the door to the hall and came forward, to stand beside her, saying as he came: "Why, no; the thing is—"

He stopped. Celia had raised casually interested eyes to his eyes; and now, with a growing vague dread and alarm, she watched him become grave, and more grave. He hesitated, as if he were deliberating: "Shall I tell her? Or shall I wait?"

"*Tell* me!" she cried out.

He told her. He was leaving New York. He was going to Europe, to study Old World architecture. The firm was sending him, and he would be gone a year or two—maybe longer. He didn't know exactly when he would sail, perhaps any day now. In the meantime, all his stuff was to be stored.

"It's very sudden," he said, "which is why you haven't heard about it. In fact, it wasn't settled definitely until this morning. I was going to try to see you tomorrow and tell you—"

Long before he had finished telling her, Celia was standing no more, but sitting, looking small and crushed, and very pale indeed, with enormous eyes.

"You're not making this up?" she said.

"Do you think I am?"

She looked at him, and shook her head. And she closed her eyes for j st a second, so as to shut out the vision of what "a year or two, maybe longer," of weeks like the week just past would be. But when she closed her eyes, she only shut the vision in. She looked at Kerry again.

"Oh, Kerry," she said, "you can't. You mustn't. I couldn't *bear* it."

Kerry made a little eloquent gesture with both hands. "It's a great chance," he said. "You wouldn't want me to give it up. Would you?"

"No, but—two whole years—" Celia's voice broke. "Oh," she wailed, "what will I do? All sole alone in New York, all that time—"

The flicker of a smile crossed Kerry's mouth. "Stop me if you've heard this one," he said ironically. "You might marry me—and go too."

He said: "You're in love with me. Don't sit there and try to tell me you're not."

"I wasn't going to," Celia said humbly. "I—do love you, but—"

"But you're never going to marry again. I know. Tell me why," commanded Kerry.

"I've told you why, a hundred times!"

"I know. But tell me again. I'll help you," Kerry said. He had begun to seem to enjoy himself immensely. "It's because you like to live alone, isn't it? To laugh when you want to laugh, and cry when you want to cry—"

This was a quotation of hers, given with gusto.

"Hush!" said Celia.

"Well, it's because you prefer a flock of men to any one man—"

"No," said Celia firmly.

Kerry was beaming at her. "My memory is excellent," he said. "Shall I proceed?"

"Y-yes."

"Well, it's bec—"

But he did not have to proceed. He was not allowed to.

"No, never mind," said Celia. "They're—silly reasons. They don't mean anything at all," she said.

THE engagement of Celia Jordan, divorcée, to marry again was half an hour old when she remembered to exclaim: "Oh, tell me something! Where under the sun have you *been*, all these evenings lately?"

"Right here."

"You haven't!"

Kerry nodded. "Here, or at the office—sitting listening to the telephone ring, and knowing it was you. And," he added calmly, "getting cheerier, hour by hour."

"Kerry McDonald! Of all the—"

"Oh, that's nothing," Kerry said. "That's not the half of my infamy. Wait'll you hear this!"

But he seemed a little afraid to tell her.

"I'm not leaving New York," he said finally, simply, holding her close. "That was—extemporaneous. The only reason the place is like this is, it's going to be painted tomorrow."

He waited. . . . .

But whatever his apprehensions were, they appeared to be groundless. "Tramp!" Celia murmured lovingly.

Her glance strayed from him, to rove the room. "What color?" she asked. "Oh, honey, listen—let's have it black and silver—"

"LET'S DO SOMETHING!"

(Continued from page 61)

cave in, the woman on the cop on the door, she discovers her husband prostrate under the table, cold and stiff, a pistol in one hand, a niblick in the other, and a bullet in his head. He had caught himself cheating on the score-card.

That's why I say, if your wife persecutes you, teach her the game. As Trader Horn told me on his visit here, "More missionaries are converted than heathens. A reformer is safe so long as he doesn't know what he's reforming you from. But as soon as he tastes a card, a sip or a savage girl's lips, it's he who is getting reformed."

PLAYING at missionaries is almost as good as any other sport. The thrill some women get stopping their husbands from enjoying themselves is worth the thrill of holding four of a kind or making a hole in one. When a woman can say to her dear one, "So! You're a gambler!" the words melt in her mouth like spumoni ice-cream. She smacks her lips. "Ah! So here you are in the cellar rolling those spotted things again!" And she sweeps out the cube artist and his friends with her broom. But the boys will continue to shoot the works if they have to climb Mount Everest to play dice on its peak. For after all, what else is that peak good for?

But of all harassed, misunderstood players, the auction pinochle artist suffers even more than the golfer. First of all, he has to be born in triplets; secondly, all three must remain bachelors; and thirdly, if married, he must belong to a gypsy tribe and be ready with his deck in one hand and his chips in the other to leave all that is near and dear to him and wander all over the world for a quiet card-table.

At that, the chess-player is no better off, nor the man who has given his best years to poker. They are an oppressed and haggard race of martyrs who sacrifice their very lives for an ideal.

You'd imagine playing is something pleasant and easy, like digging roads or blasting mines. It's nothing of the kind. A card-player can sometimes drop dead at his work, while a hod-carrier gets stronger with each hod. The strain of a royal flush is worse than a hectic flush. There are more careers destroyed on the chess-board than on the battlefield. A good banker in the gambling-house makes a bad banker in the clearing-house.

Still, it might be funny to see the world through a card-player's eyes. A jeweler would say, "Here is my card," and hand you the ace of diamonds. A broker would shuffle the deck and suggest, "We'll play the market, deuces wild." A doctor would listen to his patient's chest and nod his head: "With a heart in the hole I'd raise on your chances." A statue of business would be a huge poker-player with a deck in one hand, chips in the other, and great, wide, unexplored sleeves. Every game of proposal would be a game of rummy, and picking a good husband would be like filling a middle straight.

As a well-known gentleman of chance once told me:

"Eddie, the best way to keep alive is to kill time. I grow fat on a diet of bridge and golf. But I'd starve to death on study and toil. So I'd rather kill time with play than kill myself with work."

A nice line of talk to give me—who am on the stage working nearly all the time and have less than ten minutes a night for relaxation.

And if Ziegfeld ever found out about the ten minutes, he'd have me out front then as an usher!

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The Rise and Fall of Mrs. Titcomb

No. 9 in the series of ROUND THE WORLD WITH TITCOMBS

by Donald Ogden Stewart

(author of "Father William," "Mr. and Mrs. Haddock Abroad," etc.)

Illustrated by L. T. Holton

IT was in Budapest that romance came to Daisy Titcomb, grand-daughter of the founder of Pearson's Vegetable Tonic—the first that had really come to her since the night of May 11, 1916, when Ferguson J. Titcomb (better known in Indianapolis as "Peewee" Titcomb) had fallen over the iron deer in her grandfather's front yard and into her heart. Daisy had been playfully chasing Peewee at the time, and he, in a wild effort to escape, had leaped and fallen on his neck—a rather prophetic symbol of their subsequent married life. And so here they were, going around the world, with little Junior Titcomb and eleven trunks as an assurance to Peewee that the trip was not wholly a pleasure one.



There was a peculiar look in his wife's eyes. Something had come into her life.

"Would madame like to hear some real gypsy music?" suggested the Captain (as Peewee called him) in the large dining-room of the best hotel (of course) in Budapest.

Madame had signified with a sweep of her diamond-studded hand that it would amuse her to listen to "real gypsy" music, and the first thing that Peewee knew, a violinist had appeared behind his shoulder and was playing strange leaping chords that seemed continually on the point of starting somewhere and then changing their minds.

Peewee rather liked it, as a matter of fact, and he was just reaching in his pocket for some francs or kronen or whatever-the-dickens these people called their money, when he happened to notice a peculiar look in his wife's eyes. It made him a little uncomfortable, that look, accompanied as it was by a slightly more than normal rise and fall of the chest and a faint widening of the nostrils. He thought that possibly the dining-room was on fire and he turned quickly around, only to find that the cause of his wife's unusual actions seemed to be the gypsy violinist, who was returning her gaze with an intensity that would have called for a fire-extinguisher in any of the better Indianapolis circles.

The music came to an Hungarian close; and Mrs. Titcomb, without taking her eyes off the violinist's face, shoved a large bank-note into Peewee's palm.

"Tell him to play some more," she breathed.

The gypsy had already started, and Peewee began to worry. It was the first time, as a matter of fact, that he had ever been even a little doubtful about his wife. In America there really wasn't much cause for worry. The innate chivalry of the American men, plus the fact that she really didn't look her best at 182, had more or less relieved his mind of jealousy. But these gypsies—

His morose train of thought was interrupted by the arrival of his son Junior, who had been sent out (and not without protest) to wash some of the rich Hungarian soil off his eight-year-old hands. And with Junior came the solution of Peewee's problem. Junior took one look at his mother.

"What's the matter with Daisy?" he asked, rather irreverently.

"Shh," from his father. "Something has come into her life."

Junior looked up at the gypsy. "Hello, Joe!" he said.

"*Hello*, Junior!" the gypsy exclaimed. "You like Budapest?"

"O. K., Joe," replied Junior. "Aint you going to play at the Country Club any more?"

"I like it better here, Junior," answered the gypsy between cadenzas. "Hello, Mr. Titcomb—I thought I recognize' you."

"And this is Mrs. Titcomb," said Peewee pleasantly.

"Oh, sure," said Joe. "Say, it's sure good to see somebody from Indianapolis."

He brought the cadenza to a wailing close and bowed. Mr. Titcomb handed him the money from his wife and added a great deal more himself.

"Thanks, Mr. Titcomb," said Joe. "Anything else?"

Mr. Titcomb looked at Mrs. Titcomb. "No thank you, Joe," he said. "That will be all the gypsy music tonight."

(Next month—Dragons for Three—in China)

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THE PENALTIES OF WISDOM

(Continued from page 55)

Follen was what Nelle had meant, that the proposal at once seemed not only reasonable but imperative. That five people bound for a dance should go out to find the moon was on the face of it absurd; but to four of them it seemed no more than a logical necessity. Nelle rose and found a cloak. Annis didn't even pay that toll to common sense, but ran down the steps and stood on the running-board of Follen's car.

"I'm going to drive this incredible machine," she announced. "What a car, Hump!"

"How do you know tonight where you may want to go tomorrow?" he demanded. "You may have to be nearly anywhere when you wake—something happens, and you've got to go. Well, you need a car like this."

FOUR of us stood beside the car. One white shirt-front lingered on the steps. "Don't forget that we've promised Mrs. Willett," Ashley said.

Annis was impatient. "Any time up to midnight will be correct. How far can this car go before then, Hump?"

"Seventy miles out and seventy back, if I drive it."

"Add twenty more with me at the wheel. You can stay here, of course, Jay, and be punctilious till we get back."

He came silently down the steps and joined Nelle and me in the rear seat. Annis took the car at a reasonable speed into the streets and eastward to the boulevard that led toward Windsor Cañon, but even a reasonable speed made it roar like a barrage.

Nelle pulled my head down to her lips and cried: "Isn't there a muffler?"

I lurched forward to touch Annis' shoulder. She understood and found a pedal that subdued the roar to a high-spirited humming and made apparent the clamor of our speed.

"There are motorcycle policemen in the world," Ashley said, his disapproval icy to the ear.

"No, there aren't, darling," was borne back to us, though Annis' head didn't move. "Night slays them with its sword, every one in his dewy coat. And then tomorrow's sun brings new ones to birth with tomorrow's flowers."

Windsor Cañon, a black gulf between high granite walls, rushed into our headlights, and we plunged into it. The cañon is twenty miles of double curves and abrupt grades, never straight for a hundred yards, the road an embankment high above a flashing stream. Our speed must have slackened, but the walls intensified our roar, and one had a sense of space falling away, just outside our tires. It was beautiful madness, this headlong dive toward blank walls that fled before us. The night became altogether unreal, altogether fantastic, a processional of insane shadow-forms, a rushing haste, a beam of light stabbing the darkness.

Cars coming toward us gave me the silhouettes of two heads in front, motionless, rapt with the ecstasy of speed. One found me looking curiously at Ashley, whose lips wore an expression of distaste. I would not suggest that he was afraid: Ashley had good nerves, and if he hadn't, no one would have been afraid with that inspired driving. He merely disapproved of it—fervently.

He caught my scrutiny and said: "It's so damned unthrifty, this taking risks. Recklessness is always stupid."

We came out of Windsor Cañon into the farther valley, where few cars ventured and where dirt roads forced Annis to a staider speed. Crossroads took us to successively deeper ruts, and at last, on the far side of the valley, led us into another cañon, narrower and wilder than the first. The great



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machine nosed into it, the headlights a sensitive antenna feeling out vertical rock, cottonwoods, the flash of a creek. We went quietly now, with a decorum that allowed one to feel the night. Rock was gaunt on both sides of us for a while, then widened to let spruce trees grow, and finally fell away in an amphitheater, a mountain meadow. Annis turned the car off the road, across grass and gravel, to the edge of a little creek, where she stopped it. The lights fell, fifty feet beyond, on the straight face of a cliff.

"No moon yet," she said. "This may be the wrong place. It doesn't seem to be here, Hump."

"Might wait for it."

Their voices were spellbound, rapt, even drugged. All of us, I think, were anesthetized with swift motion and keen air. Reality had departed from the night: we existed on a fantastic plane where any madness would have seemed sane. . . . . Our ears opened to the sounds of mountain night, the ripple of water, the rustle of spruce.

"You'll catch cold, Annis," Ashley said. "Foolish to come without a wrap. And there's Mrs. Willett to consider."

"I say!" Hump had made a discovery. "Do you know where we are?"

"I know this is Ten Mile Cañon," Annis said. "That's all."

"Right. And that's Eagle's Nest."

"Eagle's Nest?"

"That cliff. There's a little shelf some feet down from the top. I've been there a hundred times—before there were boy scouts."

Let it be recorded that Nelle McMinn said the words that launched us into complete madness. Her voice was frankly skeptical. "Straight up that cliff, Hump?"

"No. No one on earth could. No, there's a trail off to one side in the brush. Almost a wagon-road, except for the chute down from the top to the Nest."

Annis stood up decisively and opened the door. "I'm going up."

She provoked a sharpness from Ashley. "Don't be silly! You're going to do nothing of the sort." And yet I knew, with a dispassionate assent in folly, that she was going up, that we were all going up, that sanity was suspended and mad whim irresistible.

"But I am."

Follen had already unlatched a pocket in the upholstery and found a flashlight.

Ashley's voice became, for the first time, unpleasant. "Remember Mrs. Willett's dance."

"Would heaven be panicky if I forgot it? I'm going up. Is anybody else?"

"Let's quit talking about it," Follen suggested.

He strode out into the water and informed her she could cross on stones, if she wanted to. She didn't. Three rapid steps, calf-deep, took her to the other side. Ashley swore resoundingly, took a flying leap, and cleared the creek. I feared, though, that mud and moss had probably contaminated his trousers.

NELLE beckoned me. "I told you about him. I'm going too. But a trace of sanity remains—I do want my pumps serviceable for the trail."

I picked her up and splashed through icy water to the other side. And there we were, five of us, on a shingle between the creek and the cliff, flanked by underbrush.

Ashley's frayed control gave way. "You've ruined your slippers and your stockings—your dress too, probably. You'll have to change before we can possibly go to Mrs. Willett's."

"I could go to Mrs. Willett's in a muddy dress, my dear, or—so secure is a Paige—in my underwear if I chose. But I don't think anyone's going there tonight. This is a Follen quest."

"It's damned foolish!"

"Oh, quite. But Jay, it's the foolish things you should hug to your breast and cherish with a warmth that would melt copper utterly away. Are you going to let me discover that you're utterly wise?" She turned to Follen. "Were you bluffing? Is there a trail?"

He was on the edge of our headlights' beam, where one step took him into darkness. We followed him, and were stooping in oak-brush impenetrably black. The flashlight made a dimness ahead of us; and I tried, striding before Nelle, to keep the branches from stabbing at her. I was not altogether successful. One made a scratching sound against my shirt-bosom, and I heard a sibilant rip behind me.

"That was my dress," Nelle said. "I don't mind—the one that caught my eye made fireworks."

The brush gave way to a bare spot some yards wide. Follen was directing the flashlight at a path that slanted up the hillside.

"That's it. I'll go ahead." He gave the light to Annis. "You follow me and shine it at your feet—then we'll all profit from it."

IT was one of those mountain trails whose seemingly aimless wanderings are dictated by the law of least resistance. It led directly away from the cliff we were presumably scaling, and crawled up a hillside of scrub-oak and stunted sage. The grade was steep but safe; the footing was clay, broken now and then by shale. It went on climbing steadily enough through darkness and silence, making a series of long loops that turned us back toward the cliff for some rods and then bent away again. It had the remoteness of another world, an existence beyond the stars.

There was room, sometimes, for two to walk abreast; and in such places Nelle came up to me. Ashley was between us and the moon-hunters, aloof from them and from us, obstinate, disapproving. At times we paused to let our breath come back and our hearts slow down, and in those intervals there was much laughter; but Ashley held his peace.

At one pause he demanded the flashlight and played it on the arm of his dinner jacket, where clay had made a design in white. "Look!" he said. "You've made me as grimy as a street-sweeper." Returning the torch to Annis, he slapped at the offending sleeve.

"Have the charity not to turn it on us, Annis," Nelle said, trying to supply the comfort no one else would give him. She leaned against me to investigate her slippers. "The heels remain," she whispered; "I don't know just why. Both soles went through at the first shale." Her hand tightened on my arm. "Tomorrow this will seem unbelievably ridiculous—but don't you like to live in a world where foolish things can happen?"

We moved on again, slowly, and then stopped. Annis had begun to sing. Nothing, I conceive, is more idiotic than to sing on the ascent of a mountain trail, in darkness, with a voice breaking from accelerated heart-action. But there was no awareness of idiocy in three of us, who stood listening attentively, delightedly, while an old French ballad about the woes of a deserted *Columbine* came back to us from the unseen sounding-board of the cañon.

But it gave Ashley one more atmosphere of pressure to labor under. "If you're in love with pneumonia, Annis, go right ahead. You realize the risk is enormous. You exhaust yourself climbing and get chilled through when we pause." Grievance worked upon him increasingly. "Have we all gone mad? Here on a mountain in dinner jackets—women in dancing slippers and evening gowns! Could anything be more preposterous?" One felt that Ashley would have to be correct for a full year before he could again respect himself.

For the first time in an hour Hump Follen spoke directly to him, coming several steps down the trail. "Listen," Hump commanded. "You heard what Annis said about fools. They're the beloved of God—even an Indian

knows that. If Annis does something under the inspiration of folly, she's immune from the penalties of wisdom. Pneumonia never happens to a fool—only to wise and secure people. Better button your jacket."

"I see," Ashley said belligerently. "You'll forgive me if I'm not versed in the psychology of fools."

"You should be. You'd find it useful in your effort to—"

Annis slipped in between them. "Jay, I'm dreadfully afraid that all you're bothered by is our failure to be properly costumed. Would this be a correct diversion if we were wearing boots?"

"I can't ignore our obligation to Mrs. Willett—"

"Can't you surrender yourself to a delightful impulse?"

"Call it an aberration. Frankly, no—it should have been suppressed."

"But probably wouldn't have occurred in a truly correct nature." Annis' voice was regretful, urgent. . . . . There we were in darkness, high on a mountain-side, and suddenly I was tense, with a realization that Annis was pleading for rather more than the meaning of her words. Jay Ashley and the mansions of copper were at test.

"Do you always want to know where you'll be tomorrow morning?" she asked with a disturbing solemnity. "Are you happy with all your future plotted and all your desires laid out in advance? Can't you find any pleasant insanity in yourself?"

"None," he said curtly, "that would lead me to climb a mountain in evening clothes."

"Then respect it in others," she said, and her white dress moved away.

Follen was already summoning her. "Come on, Annis; we're still below the Nest. Wisdom will not dwell in Folly's tent, my dear; it's futile to invite it for the week-end."

WE started upward again. Oak-brush yielded to small spruce that were a more profound midnight beside the trail. Far out in space there was apparent the other wall of the cañon, which meant that we had climbed high. Then the trail ceased to climb and looped itself in a long straightaway. We hurried forward, pressing ourselves against a blackness that yielded before us. The flashlight glinted level on the trunks of spruce, on worn rock, on slashes of naked clay. Then two pines stood up in the light, and ground ahead of us ended with a line of pure black.

"We're here," Follen said.

And Annis' rapid breathing was strangled with laughter. "Oh, Hump, what quadruple fools! Surely we're immune from all the penalties of wisdom, from gnats and mosquitoes, and stitches in the side, and from peril of poison ivy!"

"Why?" he demanded.

"There isn't any moon tonight! It's new and had set long before dark. I've just remembered!"

Baritone and contralto mingled their laughter. I joined; Nelle joined; and so for a moment there was only mirth on the cliff's edge—and Ashley's silence.

We grew calm, and Follen said: "It's possible for immunity to come too late. A man can be wise too young."

Annis abruptly switched off the flashlight. "What do you mean?" she asked.

"Do you want to know? How often have you said so yourself?"

Nelle intervened, in the interest no doubt of decorum. "Let's have the light, my dear. Now we're here, I'd really like to see Eagle's Nest."

Annis seemed glad of the diversion. The light played on the edge of rock. Four of us crowded forward and looked down; Ashley stood aside and slapped at lapels and sleeves and trouser-legs, and ran a handkerchief over his ruined shoes. . . . . With the light directed outward, no ledge was visible, but only a black immensity of space that made one's stomach crawl and one's muscles shrink backward, cringing. But when Annis shone the light straight downward one saw, perhaps eight or ten feet below, a shelf of rock some twenty feet wide and twice as long. It was like a bite taken out of the cliff, bastioned at each end by slanting shoulders of granite.

Follen explained. "It's a two-thousand-foot drop to the creek—you'd have time to make a will or grow a beard before you landed. . . . . What? Oh, you can get down to it at the far end—there's a crevice in that left shoulder. It's easy enough by daylight."

Annis knelt down on the brink, a blur of white stooping above eternity. "What a positively godlike feeling! Here one is, kneeling on the far edge of the world, above death and horror. Yet if I took it into my head to make headlines—what a frightful anticlimax. I'd only hit Eagle's Nest and stick!"

She laughed. And then the ripple of amusement ended in an *"Oh!"* of paralyzing fright. Follen leaped for her; I leaped for her; Ashley leaped for her. Three arms were about her, and we drew back convulsively from the far edge of the world.

"For God's sake, what is it?" Ashley cried.

"My corals! They fell over the cliff."

"Thank God!" he burst out, with passionate relief. "Now you'll never wear the accursed things again."

"But they're my *corals!*"

"They were." Between annoyance and satisfaction his voice had a jagged edge. "What did Follen say about making a will before reaching the bottom? They're halfway down, now."

At that black gulf the fascinating horror of height was dulled by this new sensation. Nelle stepped behind me to put an arm around Annis.

"Hold on," Follen said. "They wont fall farther than the Nest."

In the force of Annis' relief one saw how much emotion she had been restraining. "Thank heaven! You'll have to get them, Jay."

She played the light on Eagle's Nest. Its circle was bitten off at the edge. "Thanks, no," Ashley said.

"You must!"

"Don't be hysterical." Ashley's anger had been cumulative since the beginning of the automobile ride. Now it began to break free. "Risk my life for forty dollars' worth of antiques? Don't talk like a fool!"

The word had danced lightly enough this evening; but all of us, I think, flinched now. But Annis said, tranquilly: "Thank you, Jay. It's a reassurance. . . . . Have you been waiting for me to ask you, Hump?"

"I'm unthrifty. Hold the light."

THE crevice that gave entrance to the Nest proved to be a twisting fault in the rock, a chute neatly fitting the body. Save at the turn where it debouched on the ledge, it was as cozy as a Pullman berth on a slant. In the thin light of the torch, Follen lowered himself, face outward, into the chute, bracing his arms against the sides. The black bow of his tie had come unknotted; scrub-oak had raked a wide scratch across one cheek; and as he slid slowly downward, his coat wadded under his shoulders. The beam played on him till he stood erect, his head perhaps three feet below us.

"Give me the light," he said.

"Catch."

She dropped it into his hands. We were left in darkness while its glimmer played eerily below us.

"Need I point out," Ashley said, "how recklessly capricious it is to make a man risk his life for a miserable string of beads?"

"If you should," Annis answered, "I might point out that that isn't all he's risking it for." She called, suddenly: "I'm coming down, Hump. Hold the light!"



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She fitted herself into the crevice. With a startled "No!" Ashley seized her shoulder as the light came upward from below. Follen shouted: "Don't interfere, you fool—she'll drop!" The white evening frock of Annis Paige slid downward, suffering audible damage. Then Follen was helping her round the shoulder of rock; and to my amazement, Ashley was climbing into the chute.

"Hello!" Follen remarked conversationally. "Here comes propriety. Take it easy around the turn."

I reflected that after all it was time I had new dinner clothes. For obviously, inescapably, we were all going to slide down that rock to Eagle's Nest.

"It may not be Follen—it may be the conjunction of the planets; but you seem to have been right," I told Nelle. "And I trust these charming clothes of yours don't mean much to you."

"It's a new dress," she said, "but only a sordid soul could begrudge it to moon-madness on a moonless night." The delightful Nelle was laughing. She stood away from me and laughed. Then she leaned against me and laughed. Finally she sat with her feet in the chute, and laughed. "Poor Jay! It's one of those inconceivable things—and amenity is quite powerless to deal with the inconceivable. . . . . Let's drop, my dear. Perhaps we can save fragments of my skirt. I'm so rotten thin, I don't fit. Going down!"

SHE lowered herself into the flaw, and I followed close behind. Once in, I had a vivid realization of a thousand feet of space, a vision of two bodies sprawling on air and twisting while they fell. Then Follen had helped Nelle round the knob and was holding the torch for me.

"Suggestions of a burlesque show," he said. "Four flawless legs! Intimate revelations a thousand feet in the air!"

"Let's see how drastic they are."

Annis took the flashlight and directed it on Nelle. Climbing had changed her hair from sleek blonde waves to riotous curls. It had ripped gashes in her pumps and slashed one stocking till it hung in shreds round her ankle. Three or four triangular rips in her skirt, a gash in the bodice, and a very dirty face completed the disorder.

"You wouldn't cause talk in a hospital. I feel much worse."

Annis gingerly turned the beam first on her slippers, which were quite destroyed, and then on her head, which was as carefully waved as it had been at dinner. "That seems to indicate poise," Nelle said hopefully. The light passed on to a frayed shoulder strap, a ripped-out waist, and a huge rent in chiffon that disclosed a garter and a frill. She snapped the light out. "You're quite right, Hump. It's an impromptu révue."

She turned it on again to sweep it over three disheveled men. Then suddenly another wave of laughter broke over us. A thousand feet in the air, precariously perched on a shelf of rock, impenetrable darkness walling us in, we roared like excited children, or like the bewitched. The night was resonant with mirth, alive with adventurous fellowship, rich with delight.

But, it developed, Jay Ashley wasn't joining the mirth. When its crescendo had passed, he inquired icily: "Meanwhile—have you found the corals?"

"Give me good sound sobriety every time," Follen said. "It's valuable, this high in the air. Shine a light, Annis."

She did, and we went carefully down the length of the Nest, hugging the rock wall. At the far end Follen stooped and picked up the necklace. He held it close to the torch, slipping it bead by bead through his fingers. There was a faint shine of gold.

"I'm sorry, dear," he said gently, apparently quite unaware of either his gentleness or the endearment. "See, one of them is crushed."

"Do you suppose that matters?"

"You're damned lucky it isn't all of them." Nothing in the last ten minutes had tended to restore Ashley to good humor. "Well, we've got them. Let's get out of here."

The beam of light circled eccentrically while Annis gave back the beads to Follen. Then she put out a hand and touched Ashley's arm. "Doesn't some tiny, living fragment of you respond to tonight? Can't you discover, anywhere, some mad impractical pleasure?"

"I thought so!" he said triumphantly. "You don't want to go back. You dropped those beads down here on purpose."

There was muttered dissent from Hump Follen, and I pressed nearer, vaguely feeling that personal combat a thousand feet in the air would be an undesirable addition to our evening.

"I didn't, truly," Annis said. "And I do think you could be gracious, even here."

"Sorry," he said brusquely, "but I haven't had your experience at sleeping out in the mountains."

There it was. Unconsciously I nodded my agreement—for that atrocious slur was a logical climax to his emotions, which had progressively moved toward it. It did things to my emotions, and in the glimmer at the edge of the flashlight's circle, Nelle McMinn looked wounded and angry. Annis, her face in the shadow above the torch, did not. She looked serenely back at him and put out a negligent hand to restrain any impulsiveness that Follen might feel.

"No, of course you haven't," she replied slowly. She paused, her shadowed face inscrutable. "I think, Jay, it's perhaps time you did."

Her arm made a sudden movement. The circle of light climbed the cliff wall, turned upward, and paused a perceptible instant at the top of its arc and then fell downward and outward into space. Eagle's Nest was impenetrably dark, with the faint blur of chiffon where Nelle and Annis stood, and of three shirt-bosoms framed rectangularly.

My first impression was the silence of the hills. Then Follen spoke, sharply commanding. "Everybody sit down!"

For my part, the order was unnecessary. My second sensation had been the ghastly horror of the cliff's edge, and every fiber of my body yearned and trembled for security. I had sat down with my back to the wall and my fingers clinched on little irregularities in the rock. Nelle had done likewise and pressed close to my shoulder for reassurance. The realization of that awful drop into space was a spasm that, for a moment, crowded out all other senses, all other impressions and ideas. Slowly it abated, and the night came back; deep, star-filled, silent, but not dangerous.

In another moment Annis' voice issued out of the darkness to my right. It was resonant with an emotion I would not analyze. "That's the first lesson, Jay—the moment of panic when you realize you're cut off from safety, in the cliffs."

THE vast silence welled up again and flooded over us. Night in the high places is a phenomenon of mystery. Microscopic sounds lay against the silence and intensified it; the rustle of some one's clothes against the rock, the dryness of spruce trees stirring somewhere far off, the crash of a half-ounce of rock detached somewhere and rolling somewhere else. One was transfixed with isolation.

Nelle's voice, when she spoke, was tiny and awed. "It's really cold."

Follen said: "It will get colder."

And Annis: "Try it sometime in the rain."

I wriggled out of my coat and fumbled with it till Nelle's arms slipped into the sleeves. A dinner-jacket is not an ulster, but at least it would comfort those unprotected shoulders. The act seemed to be recogniz-

able in the dark, for Annis laughed softly, uncertainly, the tone breaking downward.

"That's traditional. It's precedent. It's ritual. This sleeping out in the mountains is a little hard on men."

"Is it straight down from the ledge, Hump?" Nelle asked. Her shoulder, touching mine, shook a little.

"Right off the edge there's a sort of gable for twenty or thirty feet—the pitch of a steep roof. Smooth. You'd roll happily down that; then you'd drop. It's straight to the bottom. You saw the finish down below."

"I'm getting inventive. I'm wondering why we don't make a fire. The better sort of woodsmen do. Still, I've no shoelace to make a bow."

"Kit Carsons don't pick out a rock ledge for sanctuary, and I'm sure boy scouts don't, either. There aren't even sagebrush roots to burn. You've got to be above the luxuries of the flesh, Nelle."

"That," Annis added to his tuition, "was the superiority of our scandalous night. There was some wood on our little precipice. Only—it wouldn't light in the rain."

The conversation reminded Jay Ashley of something he carried in a pocket. Also, it stung him beyond his last resource of self-control. He made a strangled exclamation, something between a roar and a mere neigh. Then he burst into speech.

"I take it for granted that to throw away the flashlight was mere waywardness and anger. But are all four of you damned fools? You sit here on the edge of a cliff and talk! Your feet almost touch destruction, and you act as if this were a dinner-table. Miles from home, shivering, facing the prospect of driving through the streets in costumes that will suggest the extremes of debauchery—and you chatter, you laugh, you conduct yourselves as if it were a perfectly sensible, perfectly correct occasion, as if well-conducted people—"

INTO the man's incoherence came the gentle contralto of Annis Paige, saying derisively: "Bewilderment of the correct life forced against its will into commerce with the ungodly."

"I'm sorry, Annis," he stormed. "I'm sorry I'm so constituted as to regard this sort of thing not as romantic adventure but as stupidity or worse. However, I am—and if you prefer to shiver among like-minded people, that's your privilege. I'll take the liberty of driving the automobile home."

"Just how," Follen said, "are you going to get to it?"

"This way."

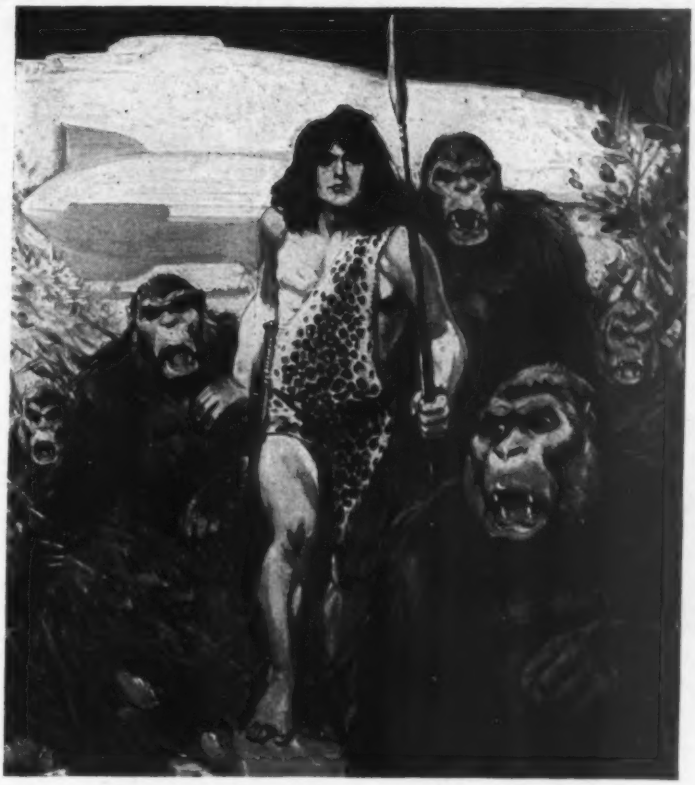
Ashley snapped the flint of his cigarette-lighter and made a small, quivering flame in the darkness. By its light, hugging the wall, he came down the ledge almost as far as Nelle and me before Follen caught up with him. A long arm reached over his shoulder, the light went out, and Follen roared: "Sit down!"

He sat down. Follen made his way back to Annis. From the darkness, he growled: "You're supposed to slug a drowning man if he interferes with your pulling him out. I'll slug you, Ashley, with great good will. Why, you utter fool, you can't climb that chute by the flicker of a match! It's climbing, understand, not sliding down. You'll have to wait for daylight—or kill yourself."

"Please, Hump," Annis entreated, "please take back the 'fool.'"

"I take it back. You don't belong, Ashley. At the same time I'll take an ungodly poke at you if you move an inch before daylight. And"—Follen's voice leaped up, full of a great longing—"how I have wanted to!"

That was that. Silence again welled up from the storehouse of the world. There was the rustle of clothing, and one realized that Follen's jacket was being transferred to Annis' shoulders. She protested in whispers, but he silenced her.



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MISCELLANEOUS
Continued from Page 23

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"It's ritual. You ought not to protest, Annis."

Queer things were happening to her voice. "Of course. How well we seem to remember that night."

"We haven't remembered all of it."

"The coat was the first remedial measure, Hump. Are you waiting for Nelle to suggest the second?"

Nelle spoke from beside me. "My inventiveness has been devising it." She drew my arm round her, laid her head on my shoulder, and snuggled as close to me as she could. "It seems to me eminently practical. Daniel Boone himself could suggest no better woodcraft with the materials at hand."

"But don't forget,"—the blurring of Annis' voice was more apparent still,—"don't forget that you're spending the night on a mountain with some man. You're spending the night in his arms. So correct people will always have a pleasant curiosity about it, Nelle, and your *fiancé* will at last express his doubts."

"I was about to say," Nelle announced, "that a device for the preservation of personal comfort, however pleasant, has no implication of undying love. So, my dear cousin, you needn't feel obligated, henceforward, to make love to me. . . . . Oh, Lord, I'm cold!"

But Follen was talking excitedly: "Do you hear that? Do you hear what Nelle's saying? How was I to know?"

"My dear, my dear. Is that why you went storming away from Windsor? Because you thought I might think you were merely satisfying a convention? After that night in the rain, after holding me in your arms from darkness to daylight, Hump, Hump—you thought I would cheapen that? You thought I'd be afraid you were making an honest woman of me? Darling, what fools we were!"

"How was I to know? How in God's name could I tell?"

"Well, my dear, you might have experimented—just tentatively." There was a moment of silence. Then: "I've kissed him, Jay. You can go—" She was kissing him again.

NELLE sighed and crept closer. "I hope I can sleep. Good-night, my dear; I'm to be a bridesmaid tomorrow." She pulled my head down to whisper: "Poor Jay—how will he ever explain it all to his valet?"

HAPPINESS AND HANDWRITING

(Continued from page 84)

"Was she really beautiful?" I asked my father, invading that laboratory where he spent so many hours experimenting in the manufacture of fraud-proof papers, permanent inks and other devices which he was habitually striving to create.

"She wasn't beautiful at all," he said angrily, as if he had been cheated personally by her lack of charm.

"But how do you account for her ability to fool him into marrying her?"

"The world is full of men of that sort," he said. "They are like those richly colored little fiddler crabs that we see scurrying on the marsh beach at low tide in Florida. Sand-fiddlers, the natives call them. They have on one side of their heads a monstrous claw, often quite as big as their bodies; but the opposing claw is a shrunken, quite useless appendage. They have an absurd likeness to the fiddlers in an orchestra as they rustle along the beach."

"But this man was a banker!"

"Certainly he was a banker, but he wasn't anything else. That is precisely what I am trying to tell you. One side of him was developed all out of proportion to the other. In business he was formidable; in his social life he was futile. He represents a type that is too common in the American scheme of things. He went into a bank determined to succeed. He knew nothing of women and was, probably, proud of his inexperience. He could analyze the statement of some big business organization and place his finger unerringly on any weakness. That was his big claw, his business sense; but in encounters with women he was helpless as a sand-fiddler when an angler strips it of its weapon and impales it on a hook to serve as bait."

IN more than ten thousand cases of disputed handwriting in which my father figured as an expert there was one piece of work of which he was extraordinarily proud. This also was a divorce case, one in which he was able to save the good name of a woman because he was better able than she was to decide, and having decided, demonstrate whether she had written a certain letter.

It happened in one of the chief industrial cities of the country when I was half grown. One of the rich men in the community was terribly jealous of his wife. Suspicion succeeded suspicion in his strangely warped mind. A word, a look, a half-suppressed smile, was sufficient to expand his fancy with torturing thoughts.

The husband was the owner of an important manufacturing establishment. The wife was the daughter of a railroad president. Their residence was a pretentious establishment in which were numerous servants. There were many horses in their stable, attendants for each of the five children; every form of luxury was theirs, and might have been enjoyed but for that twist in the husband's mind, that ungoverned imagination in which fancied infidelities became more real than had they been actual.

At last, after eleven years of frantic endeavor to convince him that she was entitled to his trust, the woman took her children and returned to her father's house. The husband sought to persuade his father-in-law to exert his influence in behalf of a reconciliation. The woman's father said bluntly that his daughter had been a fool to submit to the man's tyranny as long as she had. He said he would help her get the separation and the alimony to which she was entitled if it took every dollar he possessed. It was a declaration of war in the society of that city.

Soon afterward the husband made the meanest of his suspicions the basis of a suit for divorce. He brought charges against his wife and named as co-respondent his man-servant.

The husband found little support among his acquaintances. On the streets and in his clubs he was shunned. When a statement of the servant was published, indignation spread across the county. A Tennessee banker was quoted in the newspapers as having said that he was prepared to come North and shoot the servant. A number of business men offered to pay all costs of defending the woman's name, but her father declined outside aid.

The servant disappeared, but detectives employed by the woman's lawyers trailed him, and wrung from the man a confession that he had been bribed by his employer to make his compromising statement. He was kept in prison for four months, a discredited witness; but when the divorce-suit came to trial, the husband named another co-respondent. This time he named another man employee.

The handwriting of the wife was of that bold, angular style such as is affected by many women who have been educated in fashionable boarding-schools. When the husband's lawyers, after she had taken the stand in her own defense, showed her a few letters, including one known as Exhibit Five, she glanced at them and conceded she had written them. Then they produced a package

containing about forty other letters. She denied she had written them, but her denial was in conflict with the weight of evidence.

"How did you discover the flaw in the case against that woman?" I asked my father long afterward, when he had expressed some pride in his part in it.

"For an understanding of my behavior," he replied, "you must appreciate that Exhibit Five was a letter purporting to have been written by the defendant's wife to her Norwegian maid. The maid was a witness for the husband.

"Four experts had refused to testify for the wife when the case was offered to me. Indeed, at first I refused to testify for her. It looked as if her guilt had been established. Then I made an exhaustive examination of the letters which she conceded that she had written. There was a chance there. What I found amazed me.

"'I will take the case,' I said to her lawyers, 'if you will deny the authenticity of Exhibit Five. It may be impertinence on my part,' said I to her lawyers, 'to give it as my opinion that Mrs. Q. did not write that letter, even though she says she did. Nevertheless, I know that she could not have written it. If she did write it, then she wrote the other forty which she has denied writing. Exhibit Five was written by the same hand that wrote the disputed letters.'

"Well, the lawyers called Mrs. Q. into the office. I asked her if she had written Exhibit Five, and she said that she had done so.

"'How many letters did you write to the maid while you were abroad?'

"'Two,' she replied. 'One from Germany and one from London.' Her mother, who was present, nodded confirmation.

"'The letter from London and the one from Germany are in this other package,' I reminded her, and showed them to her. All were astounded.

"'You must recall the maid to the stand,' I said to the lawyers.

"'If we do, she will testify that she received three letters from abroad.'

"'No, she wont,' I insisted. Nor did she."

HERE I interrupted my father to ask him why this particular letter was of vital importance.

"It was important," he said, "because the husband's lawyers were going to offer it as a standard in judging the other letters attributed to the authorship of the wife, but which she denied that she had written. Any competent handwriting expert could see that Exhibit Five had been written by the same hand that wrote the compromising ones.

"Well, when the maid took the stand, she acknowledged she had received only two letters from abroad.

"'Now,' I said to Mrs. Q.'s lawyers, 'ask her where she got Exhibit Five.'

"'It was handed to me,' the maid testified, 'by Mr. Q.'s brother.'

"'Where?'

"'Aboard ship at the dock just before sailing time.'

"Right there the case blew up. The entire pattern of the divorce-suit was changed from that moment as a kaleidoscope alters its pattern when you turn the barrel. From that moment, I think, everyone in the courtroom understood that Mr. Q. was a scoundrel who was deliberately scheming to blacken his wife's name unjustly.

"Mr. Q.'s brother was one of his lawyers. In response to questions the maid then revealed that the brother had told her this letter, supposedly from her mistress, had been enclosed in one he received from Mrs. Q. through the mail. As a matter of fact, it never had gone through the mail. It was an out-and-out forgery, a deliberate plant."

"But what," I asked, "did it say?"

"It asked the maid to be on Mrs. Q.'s side in the impending divorce. You see, the home had been broken up by the quarrel, and this maid was returning to her home in the old country. Mr. Q. was paying for the trip. This letter was a key document. The thing becomes clearer when you understand how Mrs. Q. testified after hearing the maid's admission.

"'Why,' asked one of her husband's lawyes on cross-examination, 'why did you first testify that you had written this letter which yon now deny?'

"'Because,' retorted Mrs. Q., 'I did not read the letter. I knew I had written a letter much similar and sent it to the maid. But I did not know there were forty other letters to follow which depended upon my identification, my acknowledgment of this one. If I had known, I should have examined it much more carefully before I gave my answer the first time.'

"Then I took the stand. I testified that I had been the first to discover that Exhibit Five was a forgery of Mrs. Q.'s handwriting. Well, you should have been in that courtroom then! The lawyers on the other side were thunderstruck and betrayed their agitation by asking for an adjournment. It was refused. I continued to testify.

"There was one letter that had been torn into small pieces and then reconstructed on a sheet of cardboard. This seemed to be a letter in which Mrs. Q. had called the servant, and supposed lover, 'dearest' and advised him to sleep as late as he pleased in the morning. I testified that this letter had been doctored with a lead pencil. With a microscope I showed where the pencil line had been drawn from one bit of the note to another showing on the cardboard between the pieces. This bit of pencil line was probably not over one two-hundredth of an inch long, but it was vastly important. I also showed that five pieces of the paper as they appeared on the cardboard did not match, and this evidence, too, was supplemented by my microscope.

"The real climax came after I testified that I had discovered at least two distinct hands in the writing of the forty compromising letters, and succeeded in identifying the chief author of the forgeries. Some of these were innocent letters of Mrs. Q.'s to which had been added sinister phrases. This forger had shown an amazing ability to imitate the angular handwriting of Mrs. Q. Who was the forger? Photographic enlargements of the doctored letters showed even to inexperienced eyes differences in the quality of the writings there. It became obvious that each of the compromising letters contained writing of two individuals, writing that was superficially similar. A certain woman in the family was suspected. Mrs. Q.'s lawyers supplied me with standards of the suspected woman's writing. When I examined these, there was no longer any doubt in my mind. I could name the forger. A surprising feature of the case was the marked similarity of the normal writing of both women. It was a family resemblance."

"Well," I said, "how do you explain that?"

"Simply enough," he retorted. "The forgeries were prepared by a young kinswoman of Mrs. Q. Each had attended the same fashionable boarding-school. Each had been taught the same system of writing. The women had quarreled, and the younger one, subjected to evil influences, had been induced to betray the elder one. Before it was too late, she repented. She testified for Mrs. Q. Mr. Q. lost his suit, and a few months after the case was decided against him, the wife filed suit against him. She won a divorce and several hundred thousand dollars in alimony."

BUT I was still curious and somewhat puzzled about this case.

"At the risk of seeming to be thick-witted," I said, "I want to ask more about those forty letters. How had they been gathered? How were they made to seem to have been sent by Mrs. Q. to the servant?"

"You must remember," my father ex-



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plained, "that Mr. Q. was quite rich. He had retained a swarm of private detectives. One of these men planted some of the forged letters in a trunk belonging to the servant. Another of these spies then 'found' the letters. One of the torn letters had been planted in an ash-barrel. Then another spy had 'discovered' the fragments and pieced them together. Mr. Q. was actuated by a desire for revenge. He really believed, inflamed as he was by jealousy, that his wife was guilty. In his efforts to prove in court that she was guilty, he did no more than is often done by ambitious prosecutors and police officials. Convinced that a certain person is guilty of a crime, they then, on the theory that any stick is good enough to hit a dog with, manufacture evidence against the one they believe is guilty. In a misconception of duty they go to outrageous lengths to strengthen a case. I could tell you—"

The phone at his elbow rang. A moment later he was engaged in another case, another of his thousands of adventures designed to make truth prevail when there had been committed a crime in ink.

(Explanation of the handwriting "exhibits" on page 83: 1, Written by Mrs. S.; 2 and 3, copies of her handwriting, forged by a man who used tracings from two other samples of her handwriting; 4, written by Mrs. S. at same time as 1, but with a different pen; 5, written by Mrs. S. at another time and under different conditions.)

TODAY'S YOUTH

(Continued from page 71)

when his son was home for the week-end. He said that the law was the fundamental basis of society and that,—as Mr. Hoover recently pointed out,—our best people should obey it and thus set a good example to others not so blessed. "Whether you believe in a law or not, until it is repealed," said the eminent lawyer, "it is your bounden duty as a citizen to respect it." Otherwise his son would be an anarchist, and so forth.

"What did you say to your father?" was asked.

"I didn't say anything. How could I? He was playing bridge with us. Some friends had dropped in."

"You mean that you did not care to differ with your father in the presence of your guests?"

He hesitated and smiled, apparently a little bored or faintly amused. "No, that wasn't it exactly. We were gambling, of course, but that was only one of the laws Father had broken that day. He had played golf with me after church. That was another. In our State the law against games on the holy Sabbath day is still on the books. When he sliced his drive on the third hole, I heard him cussing it, and that was Violation Number Three. None of these laws has been repealed yet. On the way home he broke the speed-laws, and now he was telling me I must respect the majesty of America's noble experiment. So what could I say?"

Perhaps that is the answer.

We all have our pet principles. As this father well said: "No one can make his own laws in organized society." But everyone can make his own choice, it seemed to the son. So let us not blame the lad for being amused. Many of his classmates have fathers who are dry in public only. No wonder they are cynical about the law.

ONE still hears a great deal nowadays about the aimlessness of the modern college student. We are informed, often by those who teach him, that he "lacks a serious purpose in life." Let me quote their own words—namely, from that same self-revealing class census.

"Is your future occupation decided?"

In answer to that question, only one hundred and ninety-six answered, "Yes." One hundred and ninety-eight answered, "No." The rest of them did not answer at all. Does not this give our pessimists an admirable opportunity to say: "I told you so"?

But you can get whatever you like out of statistics. Nothing is so untrue as facts—uninterpreted. From what I have reported about drinking and the Volstead Act, one can jump to the conclusion that modern students are going to hell, or else that Prohibition is, either or both, as suits one's prejudices or preferences. In this article I am not trying to prove anything, except the infallibility of one law—the unchanging Law of Change.

In the old days the majority of students, both boys and girls, came to college already primed with a purpose and aiming directly at a profession—teaching, the ministry, the law, medicine, and so forth. In the great changes that have taken place during the last couple of decades in America, particularly economic changes, an entirely different state of affairs has come about. Everyone goes to college now who can possibly afford it. (And, therefore, many who cannot.) It is the thing to do. The motive is more often social than educational.

If I were to generalize from my own personal contacts, I would say that about all the students want to write—chiefly plays. Or act. Many of them would like to teach, and some of them still carry out that ambition, despite the fact that this is indeed a very serious purpose. For they know that they will begin with a salary somewhat less than that the trustees of the university pay their chauffeurs. Later, after several years' graduate work which adds a Ph. D. to their names, they are often paid as well as a head gardener. If advanced to a full professorship they receive almost as much as a really great French cook.

But so many others who have this or a similar high aim think twice before they shoot. In most cases they throw over their cultivated tastes, abandon their promising talents and, though hating it, go into the office or the factory with the old man, or get a job selling bonds in some nice firm, controlled by a prominent alumnus whose acquaintance has been cultivated in an upper-class club. Most of those tastes for "higher things" prove only a handicap for the practical purposes of their present aim.

The modern student is not cynical. He is merely sensible. So long as we retain the present social and economic order, we should not blame our clear-eyed youth for working it for all it is worth instead of being worked by it. Inwardly the modern student is no more materialistic than the old-fashioned student. He is simply a realist, not a sentimentalist.

"What do you consider the greater benefit from college: a—education; b—contacts?" Contacts won by one vote. Seventeen members of the class replied, "Fifty-fifty." Criticize them if it makes you feel better, but that will not change the state of affairs any more than scolding for their actions and reactions anent Prohibition.

In one of the classes back in the middle nineties, thirty-six of the members entered callings which might be called non-materialistic, social-service jobs. And this does not include the lawyers, because for the purpose of the present point, the lawyer is considered a business man. In a recent graduating class only fifteen per cent went in for such things.

Back in the old days before the Great War, on Saturday nights, when our week's work was done and we ought to have been preparing for the next week's work or attending to some of our "extra-curricular activities," it was our custom to drop in at the

dormitory room of some classmate and talk, sometimes all night. Sometimes there would be as many as a dozen of us, more often half that number. We used to air our views and argue about every subject in the world, every subject but one. I don't remember our ever discussing sex. Maybe we were afraid of it. It was considered bad form. Besides, we had not shared the inestimable benefits of books on abnormal psychology. We had never heard of suppressions, and I cannot remember one of us who could boast of owning any complexes. But we used to drink beer and talk about God. One looks back upon those long ambrosial nights as the most beneficial feature of four brief years of campus life.

I asked a modern student to tell me about the present-day counterpart of this. He said such things happened rarely, if at all. "You see, there is hardly anyone left on the campus on Saturday night. All who can go away to town or country house-parties for the week-end. And they don't go in much for telling what they really think—except to most intimate friends, and few of us have many of them. Besides, it's so hard to find any real beer in town or any real God in church. We don't care for near-beer or near-God."

I asked him if they drank hard liquor because they didn't believe in needled beer or because they didn't believe in the God of the modernists.

"Both," was the answer. And he changed the subject.

I HAVE heard a great deal about a "spiritual awakening" sweeping over the youth of the land. I have not been able to isolate it. If they have an emotional hungering and thirsting for religion, their camouflage is too clever for me. But I shouldn't be surprised if they were getting ready for it. They are interested in religion, many of them, but as yet it is mostly an intellectual interest. Well, that's all right. It is better to approach this matter intellectually than sentimentally. Many of them are keen about the course on the Philosophy of Christianity.

I have on my desk a letter from a professor at one of our colleges which is eminent but not large. He writes: "There are eight religious men in 1929. One leaves after his graduation to become a Benedictine monk in Scotland. One ex-member of his class is there now. There was much discussion of religion in freshman year, none since. No 'groping,' no 'yearning,' no talk of it."

If the spiritual awakening comes, it will not be because of the church, I think, but despite it. These are merely impressions I gathered. They may be quite erroneous. Obviously, I do not refer to those who are satisfied with the church. I mean those whom the church has lost and who would like to find a God they can believe in and peradventure worship.

When they go home for the week-end, some of these boys see their own parents stand up in church and declare in awed if somewhat unnatural tones their solemn belief in a creed which these parents do not believe—"in a liberal sense." Others, to be sure, see their parents with the same manner declare their belief in a creed in which they do literally believe. In either case, fundamentalists or modernists, it is word for word the same creed! This does not seem right. The children will not profess what they do not believe.

As one of them put it recently: "The church people stand up in public and lie to God, in order to win favor with man—then jump on me for not caring to do so too. I can at least respect the fundamentalists," he added; "but the modernists are not honest even with themselves."

We do not have to agree with this young searcher after truth, but we certainly want to know why so many of the best of our young people are leaving the church. We often ask that question. Well, they are telling us. Why not listen?

I will relate the rest of this conversation. The young man's manner was not brash or challenging, but quite sincere and thoughtful.

"It is not because the church bores us," he said. "We are used to being bored. Think of some of these droning profs. But in my case, for instance, the church arouses passions that would shame hell. Feeling as I do, I think too highly of this institution as an organization for doing good to insult it with my presence. Yet I am compelled by the university authorities to attend chapel and writhe, or read the newspaper. Once I get out of college, I will never go inside of a church again, even to be married."

Call this young man a sophisticated show-off, if you like. That will not bring him back into the fold.

One boy objected so strenuously to being compelled to go to chapel that the authorities made a special case of it. He was a conscientious objector. He objected to chapel on religious grounds.

"What denomination do you belong to?" they asked him.

"No denomination at all, but I'd like to have some religion, and this forced feeding kills it."

Instead of persecuting him, as might have happened long ago, or laughing at him, as might have happened more recently, the wise authorities made a special arrangement by which this student had an hour a week for religious discussion with the Dean of the Chapel—"and he loved it," according to my informant. Next year a similar plan will be tried in a wholesale way upon the entire student body. Those who do not want to attend services on Sunday morning in the medieval Gothic chapel will attend, and, let us hope, join in religious discussions Sunday evenings elsewhere.

I am not telling the church its business. My business is to tell how the intellectual leaders among modern youth feel—and from that we must not generalize. This minority report is not representative of the American student body, merely of the student mind. In common with the late new generation, they are determined to face facts as they are, not as told to believe they are by the authority of ancient tradition.

BUT here is the encouraging thing: They want more of the facts. Truth includes more. And they believe that. This age is not too scientific; it is not scientific enough. They believe that. The more we find out, the less we know. They believe that. Every discovery of ascertained truth only opens vistas of other truths not ascertained—as yet. The newest generation recognizes that too. The new did not. They are willing now to admit, as a great modern psychologist has said: "We are organs of something more than ourselves." Well, this is enough for a start. That fourth dimensional emotion—what Walter Lippman calls "the spirit of disinterestedness"—will come later, if at all.

That, as I interpret it, is the attitude of this newest generation. The mood of revolt has ended, but the reconstruction period has hardly begun. What they will construct remains to be seen. Meanwhile these healthy, intelligent youngsters, keen-eyed and critical, are as contemptuous of the so-called new generation as of the old. They are not trying to show us. They are willing to be shown. Who will lead the way?

Society at large wonders what it is all about. Like an old hen who has hatched out a brood of ducklings, she cannot understand. These unaccountable chicks, to her horror and dismay, are swimming out over unsounded depths. She runs back and forth on the bank of tradition, clucking anxiously. They will not come back. Some of them may dive too deep, may perish in the weeds of the slimy bottom. But of these ugly ducklings a few may turn out to be swans.



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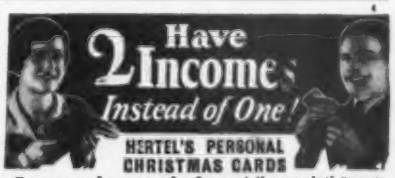
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THE LONG MINUTE

(Continued from page 75)

fled from the consequences of his unfortunate skill with a revolver. All that was apparent on the face of the story was that she had been unwilling to go, and that Mac had been treating her in a way that automatically released her from any marital allegiance to him.

I may have been wrong, but it seemed to me that my cue had come to interfere. Whatever Mac may have done until it affected Martha was none of my affair. But right there was where I came into the triangle. I did not doubt that she still loved him, but I also had no doubt that she was through with him, and that any further association with him, especially since he had become a killer, was an enforced one based solely upon cruel abuse on his part and fear on hers.

And, as I said, I alone of all people in the world knew where to find Mac—and Martha. There was not the slightest doubt in my mind as to where he had gone. I would have fled to that sanctuary myself had I been in jeopardy.

I went to the supervisor to resign my job. "Some one is going to die that I must see first," I explained, not going on further to say that very probably the other party was going to die at my own hands.

"You needn't throw up your job," he told me. "Take a couple of weeks off and come back. And while you're away, if you get any new angle on a suspense finish for the story, send it in by wire at the company's expense. What could be fairer than that?"

To save argument, I agreed.

SIX days later I crawled on my stomach through the dusk up to a weather-beaten stump on the lake shore that I had located from a distance while it was still light.

I listened. There was no sound that I could hear above the grinding of the ice which was shifting along the shore, but I took off my fur glove and held my hand over the stump. The air there was warmer than anywhere else.

Some one was down below!

I took a deep breath and steadied myself. It might be the last chance I'd get. I felt in all my pockets to see if everything I needed was ready for use.

Then I whistled, the first line of "Rings on Her Fingers" that we had used as a signal in the old days when we first discovered the cave.

I was heard, all right. There was no answer, but I knew that Mac was there, and that he had recognized the call.

Probably he was thinking that he was dreaming, that he could not have heard the crazy thing. So I repeated it.

After a moment he answered.

"Hello below!" I hailed.

"Who are you?" he asked, although of course he must have known.

I told him.

"Go away!" he ordered.

"I've come to talk to you."

"Nothing to say."

"Where's Martha?"

There was a brief pause. "I don't know."

"You lie. She's down there."

"No. I'm here alone. If you don't believe me, call to her and see if she answers."

I did. I called her name again and again, but there was no reply.

"See!" He was almost laughing. "Now run back to your mother, but don't tell anybody where I am. Will you?"

I promised him that I would not reveal the secret of his hiding-place.

And I had turned away and was starting back for town when something stopped me. Maybe it was his laugh that I thought I had heard. Perhaps something else. Anyway, I went back.

"Hello below!" I hailed again. "I'm not going back until I see that Martha is not there."

He did not answer for a moment. Then he sneered: "What the hell business of yours is it where my wife is?"

"I m making it my business," I told him stoutly.

"You and what other ten men?" he asked.

"I'll make it the business of the police force of the entire State," I threatened, "unless I see with my own eyes that she is not a prisoner down there."

MAC seemed to consider this for some time. Finally he chuckled. "All right. I'll have to let you come down, I guess. Throw down your revolver first."

I did not hesitate but dropped one of my guns down the hole in the tree-stump.

"Now the other one," he admonished, and laughed. "You gave up the first one too easy, old man. I knew you had another."

So I surrendered my second weapon.

"O. K. Come ahead slow. I've got you covered as you come in, so don't do anything foolish."

I wriggled through the hole slowly, not only because he told me to, but also because I held in my hand a sealed tube of very thin glass which held a rather large quantity of colorless liquid. That was something I had obtained from one of the chemical experts in our studio laboratory before leaving Hollywood.

As I dropped through the hole in the ceiling to the pile of sand on the floor below I let the tube fall at my feet, where it lay unnoticed.

"The hands up, please!" Mac requested.

He had not changed enough so that I would have failed to recognize him, no matter under what circumstances I met him. Still sturdy and young-looking in spite of a grayness in the curly hair, very straight and slim, thin-lipped, cruel mouth, hard eyes—he was almost exactly what his boyhood had promised that he would become.

But I did not pay much attention to him even though he was pointing a revolver at me. For on the floor of the cave, bound and gagged, lay Martha, her sweet eyes, apprehensive with fear, straying from one to the other of us. The lamp was on the floor near her.

"I thought you said she was not here," I accused.

"That was for your own good, Nosey," Mac replied. "The fact that you now know she is here is going to make it necessary for me to keep you here until—well, perhaps for always."

"Meaning what?"

"You asked for it, and now you're going to get it," he explained. "I wanted you to go away. Now you can't. That's all."

"You're not talking about murder?"

"Oh, aint I? The second one shouldn't be hard. And they don't hang for murder in Michigan, anyway. So what do you know about that?"

It might be that he was only playing with me as a cat does with a mouse, just waiting to see what I would do, but I decided that the time had come to act. Besides, I had seen something that spurred me on. Martha's left arm was bare,—the sleeve of her dress had been torn off,—and a lurid red mark was beginning to appear on it, either a welt or a bruise, but in either case something very recent.

So I stepped on my glass tube, and it burst.

"What was that?" demanded Mac.

"How should I know?" I retorted. "This is your hang-out, not mine. Perhaps the lamp-chimney cracked."

"Oh, you think so, do you! Well, you can

just tell me if it did. I don't happen to be turning my head until after the revolver-smoke has cleared away. Say, what the hell is the matter with that lamp?"

He was quite justified in his question. The yellow flame suddenly dimmed and sputtered. Just as it threatened to expire entirely Mac fired.

But I was expecting that, and I had dropped first and he missed. The light went out, and I rolled away from the spot where he had last seen me and into which he emptied every chamber of two guns.

While he was thus innocently amusing himself, I put a small clamp-on gas-mask over my nose and mouth and crawled to Martha's side. She was breathing with desperate heaviness by this time, and I loosened her gag and placed a mask similar to my own over her face.

Mac had started to cough. "Where are you, you dirty little sneak?" He coughed some more. "So that's your game, is it? Gas? That's why the lamp went out. I'll fix you!"

I forgot that he might have a flash-light. He produced one from a pocket somewhere and found me with it.

"When you're dead, I'll take that thing off your face so the coroner wont think you look like that. If you've got any prayers say 'em in ten seconds, 'cause I can't wait."

He pulled the trigger. The hammer clicked. That was all. He had forgotten he had fired all his cartridges.

He threw the empty weapon at me. But his aim was uncertain, and the effort threw him off balance and he fell sputtering to the ground, where his struggles continued for a moment or so and then ceased.

As soon as he had quieted down, I went over to him and took the flash-lantern out of his relaxed fingers. By its light I examined his face. He was completely out and would be for some time, although I had used only just enough gas thoroughly to impregnate the cavern.

Martha was in better shape. She had not entirely lost consciousness before I had reached her with a respirator, and now she was in full possession of her faculties. I unfastened the ropes that bound her wrists and ankles and helped her to get up.

I boosted her up the short ladder which we had used even as kids in climbing from the cave and followed myself with her fur coat.

Once outside we could remove the gas masks and talk.

"Put on your coat," I told her, "and we'll start."

She did not seem to notice what I was saying. "Is Mac dead?" she questioned.

"No," I assured her. "Just out for an hour or so. If you're too stiff to walk, I'll carry you."

"Oh, but I can't leave him."

"Can't leave him? Why not?"

"He's wounded. There's a bullet in him somewhere around his stomach. I have to dress the wound every day. I must go back."

"And let him torture you, I suppose? I saw that place on your arm."

"That doesn't matter," Martha assured me earnestly. "He was just doing that because he wanted me to tell him something. He needs me, and—"

I did not wait to hear any further foolish arguments, but carried her bodily across the rough hummocky ice to a cutter sleigh that I had hired at an inland town to come to this place. She protested, but I refused to listen to her, and finally she gave in—too tired to argue any more, I guess.

BEFORE midnight we arrived at the railroad town where I had hired the rig, and were able to catch a train to Chicago. There was no drawing-room on the single Pullman which was attached to the train, but I was able to secure a lower berth for Martha and an upper for myself right across the aisle, so I made her comfortable enough for the night.

Martha had not changed even so much as Mac had, although it is difficult to understand how she had withstood the ravages of worry and maltreatment that she had doubtless been obliged to endure. She had become mature, but in such a lovely feminine way that there was no suggestion of bitterness or hardness about it.

We stayed in Chicago only just long enough to pick up some of Martha's things and then took the extra-fare train leaving for the Pacific coast that same night.

Martha did not want to go with me. That is, she did and she didn't.

"Obviously you can't stay here," I pointed out. "As soon as Mac dares come out of hiding, he'll be looking for you."

"But he'll find me, no matter where I am."

"Perhaps. Still, you'll be safer if you're with me."

"If I'm with you, the danger will be greater. He'll kill us both."

There was something in what she said.

"Besides," I added with what I suppose was a tinge of hurt sarcasm, "you still love him, no matter how badly he treats you."

"I don't know," she replied thoughtfully. "I suppose that it is a kind of love. It's a sort of a maternal feeling now; he's killed the other things. I just couldn't put my mind on caring for anything else while he still needs me."

"Which means," I conjectured, "that the kindest thing I could do for you would be to turn him over to the police."

"Oh, no. No!"

"Or kill him myself."

"Then I should hate you forever," she cried, "and I mustn't hate you. You're the only thing in all the world that I can depend on."

With which poor crumb of comfort I had to be satisfied.

I HAD a drawing-room for Martha on the Western trip, and we could sit in it and talk during the day without any danger of being overheard. She told me a great many astonishing things about her life as the wife of one of Chicago's influential underground bosses; and I, in turn, attempted to divert her mind from dwelling on her past troubles and on the probable fate of her renegade husband, by recounting my own experiences in Hollywood, especially the work in the studios.

In general the trip was for me a very pleasant experience. Martha was still the woman I loved, and she was under my protection. I had rescued her from a situation that was intolerable. All in all, I was quite proud of myself. I felt that I was a very remarkable fellow.

Until I got off the train at Los Angeles. After we had passed San Bernardino somewhere, I had got up and gone to Martha's room to take her to breakfast. She did not answer the knock on her door, and so finally I tried the knob. It was not fastened, and I walked in.

The drawing-room was empty.

It was made up for daytime occupancy, but there was no one there—nothing. Martha and her baggage were gone.

The porter came along.

"Yes suh, the lady made up her mind sudden-like to get off at Barstow this morning. She left a note for you—your name is Mr. Gleason, aint it?"

I took the envelope, and without comprehending yet the extent of the disaster, opened it.

"Dear Dan:

"I've got to go back to Mac. I keep thinking of him with that bullet in him, all alone, hunted by the police. I'm the only one he can trust. Maybe I can make you under-



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stand if I tell you that I could never be happy all the rest of my life if I fell down on this one thing which seems to be my duty. Of course I am legally absolved from all obligations, but it is only ourselves who can make laws for our hearts to obey. I've got to see Mac through this. Then, if you want me, I'll come to you.

"Martha."

Even that last sentence failed to stop the chill trembling that came over me when I thought of her danger. She had gone back to a man who would kill her for deserting him—kill her before she could even tell him why she had returned.

And I could do nothing. Even if I caught her again, I could not hold her by force.

So I went back to my job. I pretended to work, although I do not believe that my services were worth much to the Loudart Film Co.

IT seemed almost as if I had not been away. The constructionist crew were still wrestling with the finish of the underworld story, trying to get a trick ending. Time was getting short, too, because the balance of the picture was pretty well "in the can," as they say in the flickering photo factories.

There were only four of us left,—Joe Rogers had gone back East to the magazines,—but we made just as much noise as ever, clacking away at our typewriters, turning out ideas for the supervisor to blue-pencil, or arguing ourselves into a state of stupidity over details that did not amount to anything.

Then on Monday,—I'm quite sure of the day,—I received a telegram. It came just after we had started work in the morning.

"DAN GLEASON,
"LOUDART STUDIOS,
"HOLLYWOOD, CALIF.

"MAC ON WAY WEST STOP LOOK OUT STOP SHOULD ARRIVE WEDNESDAY STOP I FOLLOW TONIGHT STOP LOVE.

"MARTHA"

It was date-lined "Chicago."

I looked at the telegram for a long time. Not that I needed to, because I knew every word from one glance. I knew exactly what the hidden meaning of it was, too. Mac was after me, not to ask for any favors, but to get square with me for taking away his wife. Apparently the fact that she had returned to him had not mitigated Mac's anger toward me any.

I tried to think what I had best do. Was there any use to run or hide? Mac would pursue me relentlessly, no matter where I went, and it would only prolong the agony to make it difficult for him to find me.

All day long I studied the problem. Next morning found me with no solution.

Finally I put it up to the boys.

"What would you do," I said, "if a man was on his way to kill you?"

"Just the very question I was going to ask." The supervisor had stepped in while I was talking.

The crew stopped typing.

"Tell us your idea, Gleason."

It struck me that it might be as good a way as any of getting their reaction to the situation if I told it to them as if it were a plot without any ending. It was wild enough, in all faith.

So I did. "What would you do?" I concluded.

"Gee, I don't know," said George Chrome, looking up from his machine. He had been taking it all down, just as he always did every conversation. "You say this gunman is due to arrive the very next day?"

The door opened.

I looked up.

"No," I said, answering George, "he's here now."

Mac was very pale. The deep lines in his face looked as if he had sprinkled light yellow chalk in them.

I felt sorry for him a little. That feeling really overcast my fear enough so that I was able to hold my voice steady.

"Hello, Mac. I wasn't expecting you until tomorrow."

"I didn't think you would be." He grinned. "That's why I took a plane part of the way. I had an idea she would warn you, you dirty, sneaking skunk!"

He paused to let that sink in.

"Who is this guy—Lon Chaney?" asked the irrepressible Jay Barnett. "Introduce us."

"Sit down!" Mac drew a small-caliber automatic pistol from his pocket. "And keep out of this. Just go on with your work. I'll be through in a minute."

Jay subsided, and partly in the spirit of bravado inserted a piece of paper in his typewriter and tapped out a few words.

Mac listened. "That's a good idea. Now all the rest of you boys get back to work too. Including you, Dan. Write something,—anything will do,—try that old thing about 'Now is the time for all good men to come to the aid of their party.' And keep on writing it over and over until I've left the room. There's a silencer on this gat, and nobody will know when it goes off except my old pal Dan, and maybe even he wont know—if I'm as good a shot as I think I am. When I go out, I'm going to lock the door and you keep right on working for ten minutes after I leave."

My mind was paralyzed. I listened to the others clacking out the letters that were spelling my doom.

Mac was watching me, grinning. "How d'ye like it?" he asked. "You're never going to know what hits you. You wont even hear it. I'll show you how quiet it is."

He lowered the muzzle of his revolver, and suddenly a hole appeared in the floor. I hadn't heard a sound above the noise of the typewriters.

"Wonderful invention, aint it? Great thing for a husband with a cheating wife and a treacherous pal. Keep typing, everybody. The show aint over yet. I'm going to wait one minute, but don't anybody look at his watch but me. You'll be surprised at how long a minute is."

He took out his own watch and laid it on the table before him.

I couldn't see it, but unfortunately I had once upon a time been a pretty diligent amateur photographer, and I knew the stock trick for calculating time-exposures. You count "One thousand one, one thousand two, one thousand three," and so on. It takes one second for each count. And I couldn't help myself. My mind automatically began to tick off the seconds.

The typewriters clacked on, my own among them, my lips moved silently with that fool count, my mind picturing the progress of the second-hand of the watch on the table.

It was nearly the end. "One thousand fifty," my mind was saying. The perspiration was dripping from my forehead.

My fingers went on, my lips moved on; "One thousand fifty-six, one thousand fifty-seven," but my mind went blank. "One thousand fifty-eight, one thousand fifty-nine."

I looked up. Might as well take it like a man.

"One thousand—"

There was a crash. The gun dropped to the floor and Mac fell forward upon his face.

No other sound in the room. All the typewriters ceased.

That's all I knew.

THEY got a doctor, but too late for Mac. The exertion of the trip, the flying altitude, the tension of keying himself up to kill, had knocked out his heart, strained

already by the hardships he had been undergoing since he had been shot. Then the minute he had prepared to torture me, had put the finishing touch to him.

But the physician was able to revive me all right and send me home.

The next day I even reported for work. I was a little late, and the supervisor was there. The crew was gathered around the table bent over one of George's familiar manuscripts.

"This is great stuff, and we'll use it just as it stands, dialogue and all," declared the supervisor, taking the typed sheets and walking out with them.

"Use what—what's he talking about?" I asked stupidly after he was gone.

George grinned. "I caught every word that was said here yesterday. They're going to shoot it this afternoon as the finish of our epic."

"All we've got to do now," chimed in Jay, "is to get some kind of a finish to the love-interest, and we're all set."

We talked about that for a while, though I have to confess that my heart was not really in it. I was thinking of how strange it was that I was alive, of the fact that Martha had warned me,—perhaps she cared for me in a sort of secondary way,—that she was coming West and that I would have to tell her what had happened, and—

She opened the office door and came in. She looked at me with wide, incredulous eyes.

"Dan dear," she said, "thank God, I'm not too late."

Clackety-clack, clackety-clack!

George was taking it down.

DOMESTIC AND BUSINESS ENTANGLEMENTS

(Continued from page 89)

peared just as Samson Bates reappeared. "He aint git nothin'," Frisco read the set of Samson's shoulders.

Columbus also was cheered, despite the doughnuts. "Here whar good dee-tective fix you up jes' right," he affirmed optimistically. "Aint cawst you nothin' but my 'spenses fo' two days twel I make good."

"Whut us do nex'?" Frisco hesitated.

"You go home—"

"Dey's other places still open whar aint nobody all time talkin' 'bout chick'n-house an' suitcase—"

"—An' lemme handle dis heah case by myse'f fo' you. Ol' fo'th lesson say not to let no cli-unt git too nosy while you fixin' he business fo' him."

"Well, all right, boy," Frisco agreed reluctantly. "You eats on me two days at Henry's while you's fixin' to get me nex' to dat hund'ed overnight. An' make haste; 'Manuensis got show dat money to de lodge meetin' next week, or else—"

Frisco's retiring shuffle toward Strawberry Street gave Columbus further business opportunities. What a boy needed was clients, with the accent on the plural. Luckily, Frisco and the approaching Samson G. Bates were headed in opposite directions. This left Columbus in a sound position for intercepting the latter.

"Women sho is hahd-haided," he took up the theme he found least liable to contradiction among his male prospects. Samson was in just the right mood to agree. Columbus let his badge be visible a second, as in the nature of his business card. Samson blanched momentarily and unaccountably at sight of this symbol of the law. Columbus caught his confusion, but it didn't suggest anything to him—at the time.

"Whut all dat star pin on you 'bout, Funnyfoots?" questioned Samson amusedly.

"Dee-tective. I he'ps in d'mestic an' bus'-ness 'ntanglements."

"You means you c'n straighten out woman whut all time hangin' on to her money?"

"Git hit loose from her in two days or aint no charge. All I craves is eatin' 'spenses twel I make good."

"Whut's 'eatin' 'spenses'?"

"Jes' lemme charge my eatin'-vittles at Henry's ba'becue stan' to you fo' dem two days."

Columbus' proposition caught Samson just right. Known as a big operator in the darkest Demopolis' finance, the rate of return of one hundred dollars in two days' barbecue board struck him as eminently fair and just. It was the sort of fifty-to-one shot a financial giant like Samson was looking for.

AT the resulting arrangement Columbus brightened like a starving orphan being adopted by a restaurateur. It was nearly supper-time now, and he had two clients and two meal-tickets already to show for the day's work. All he needed now was more clients.

And from his post of vantage in the darkness beside the barbecue-stand following his supper, Columbus saw the coast being cleared for the further consummation of his wishes for an enlarged clientele. It centered in Frisco, who had just lost another domestic argument by approximately nine lengths and poor marksmanship.

"Evenin', ma'am," Columbus presented himself at the Johnson front door when the darkness had safely swallowed Frisco.

JUDY regarded him coldly. He wore trousers. And a specimen so attired that was any credit to the human race had so far never crossed her path.

" 'Scuse a stranger fo' callin'." Columbus further bowed and spoke gallantly. "But evuh since I smell de cookin' come out yo' kitchen, I says to myse'f: 'Dat woman aint und'stood.' Heaps times, fine woman got no-'count husband tied to 'em whut aint 'preciate 'em—"

"Aint hit so!" Judy thawed audibly.

"An' watchin' an' list'nin' an' smellin' whut gwine on ov' heah, I gits to spec'latin' if I cain't be of right smaht suhvice to you."

Judy finished swallowing hook, line and half the pole. Here at last was a human that talked just right, in spite of his hateful masculine appearance.

"Come in an' set while I fotch out dem chops I jes' fry," she invited him. "I *had* a husban' round heah some're 'while ago, but he pay too much mind to big lodge woman wid hund'ed dollars he say he tryin' git off her—an' too li'l to a suitcase whut I needs. I aint b'lieve nothin' he sav nohow."

"Is he de boy I's thinkin' 'bout, you cain't," agreed Columbus pleasantly. "You needs man whut you c'n lean on in d'mestic an' business 'ntanglements."

"Whut kind business you in, nohow?" Judy paused to inquire.

"Dee-tectin'. I he'ps ladies whut needs he'p."

For the first time Judy admired Columbus' feet. They seemed large enough to get a firm grip on a mean slope or situation. "You done come to de right place," she stated. "Eat yo'se'f some mo' dat chop."

Columbus regretted the doughnuts—especially inwardly. Outwardly he gave no hint of aught but happiness. Business before pleasure. And no politician prior to election could promise better times after his inauguration than Columbus was already seeing open up ahead of him. "What you crave did?" He was at her service.

"Wants make sho first dat dat husban' of mine, Frisco, aint got no int'est 'sides dat hund'ed dollars he all time talk 'bout in dat 'Manuensis woman up de Hill. An' is he, I sees Cun'l Bob, an' Frisco sees bars. 'Sides dat, I craves a suitcase."



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"Jes' gimme my eatin' 'spenses twel I makes good," Columbus accepted his third client in the same case. "Tell de ba'becue boys feed me good couple of days, is all."

After which Columbus emerged with different and happier thoughts regarding his detective *alma mater*. All they really needed, it was now proved, was a smart boy for raw material. After that—and with the first critical week over with—he ate regularly, not to say copiously. Already, by running his expense accounts end-to-end, instead of concurrently, he had a week's board arranged ahead. And heaps of folks with regular wages weren't that well fixed for the future.

Any qualms about representing practically everybody on both sides of the same case melted away in his mind, too, before the undeniable fact that everything he learned from one was bound to be of advantage to some of the others. Even being seen by one in company with any of the others presented no difficulties: it could be explained as in the professional interest of the objector.

Columbus strutted idly down the street and wondered idly why Samson G. Bates should turn a dingy lilac color every time he glimpsed the detective's shining badge.

FOLLOWING a doughnutless breakfast next morning, Detective Collins seated himself where shade and breeze seemed best suited to the alleviation of the pangs of an ill-advised indigestion.

Scarcely had he disposed himself there when he caught sight of Frisco carefully and suspiciously leaving the Johnson estate by the alley gate—and thence, with numerous backward glances, turning toward Baptist Hill.

Groaning, Columbus disturbed himself at the call of duty. So up one side of the alley slunk Frisco. And up the other, thinly disguised as a collector for an industrial insurance company, crawled dyspeptic Columbus. Most unfortunately, and unseen to either, somewhat to their rear stalked Judy, undisguisedly a married woman on the warpath.

Columbus closed the gap between himself and Frisco as the latter warily entered the gate of Amanuensis Jones—which placed him well within sight and earshot of the stirring events which followed fast. With a hasty final look about him, Frisco approached her front door and knocked confidently. What transpired next was burned deeply into several memories, notably Frisco's.

Amanuensis opened the door in person but evidently issued no invitations. Frisco reached into a pocket and hauled forth Exhibit A, otherwise a handful of silver money.

"Been tryin' out dem dices I doctored," Columbus from the concealment of a clump of hollyhocks heard Frisco explain cheerfully. "An' dey falls jes' right. Cleaned out two boys in Rock Cut wid 'em dis mawnin' befo' de sun up good. Heah de money. Now, Sis 'Manuensis, you lend me dat hund'ed you an' de lodge got, an' you gits two hund'ed back fo' hit befo' dahk. But got to push my luck befo' none dem boys git axin' huccome dem dices do dat way so *reg'lar*."

Just here Columbus caught a glimpse of coming events and burrowed deeper into the sheltering hollyhocks. Realizing that a whole lot was just on the eve of happening, a sudden strong demand for cyclone-cellars impinged itself upon his consciousness as well.

But it was Amanuensis who really finished ruining the newborn day. "Aint fool wid no crap-games,"—she wrecked Frisco's hopes. "'Sides, you's too late: Mist' Samson G. Bates come up heah befo' breakfas' an' sells me somep'n I c'n show at de lodge meetin' next week an' say hit 'bleeged an' bound to double dey money fo' 'em befo' Chris'mas. He done sell me hund'ed dollars' stock in de new bridge 'cross de bay at Ind'anap'lis, Ind'ana. Says de bridge save folks de long boat ride 'cross de part de 'Lantic ocean dar, an' 'bleeged to make big money back."

Frisco suffered thrice—because he had missed a hundred dollars, because Amanuensis had lost it, and because Samson G. Bates had got it. And the sea might give up its dead, but not Samson G. Bates an ill-gotten gain. Much of this pain appeared prominently in Frisco's face.

"Whar you say dat bridge *at?*" he checked up by a trip a labor agent had once given him north.

"Cross de big bay at Ind'anapolis, Ind'ana."

"Ind'anap'lis aint got no bay."

"Huh?"

"Aint no bay—nor no bridge—dar. I been dar. Dat Samson jes' take yo' money fo' some yaller-printed paper, widout no chance like you got wid my loaded dices to git hit back honest an' bigger. You los' yo' lodge's money, da's all!"

Amanuensis wavered in the doorway as the fears that had been rising ever since Samson's departure with her trust funds were thus confirmed. And a lodge accounting due next week-end!

With closed eyes she swayed and toppled toward Frisco. And with her toppled his immediate future. For as she sagged toward him, he gallantly and imprudently caught her, only to find her far too heavy for him to lay down without a jar that might further discomfit her. So he spun and staggered beneath his sudden load—and Judy was only twenty yards away!

Ten yards—and Frisco saw her. With a crash he dropped his burden—a crash that ruined his sole alibi by reviving the crashee. You couldn't explain to an irate wife that a lady had just that minute fainted all over you when the lady was now sitting at your feet, quite conscious and saying things to and about you that no lady should even think, let alone say!

Right away the alley was all cluttered up with departures. Frisco first. Then Judy.

Columbus remained to solicit business.

"Lemme git you some ice-water an' a fan," he addressed the still seated and semi-stunned Amanuensis.

"Nemmind no fan! Fotch me a fence-rail fo' dat Samson! I *jam* him wid hit if he aint gimme back dat money!" returned the lodge president from the floor.

Lesson Number Four returned to Columbus' mind. "Maybe I c'n 'sist you in fixin' up yo' business," he ventured. "Fixin' d'mestic an' business 'ntanglements, dat's all I does."

"Who is you?" Amanuensis demanded sharply.

"Name's Columbus. I finds things," he explained.

"Man by yo' name find a whole country once," grunted Amanuensis. "But he aint hide hit by standin' all over hit like you is."

"I's dee-tective," supplemented Columbus, displaying his star. "I fixes things up."

This big-footed black boy listened better all the time to the stricken president. Detectives were precisely what her case called for. For sleuths implied secrecy. And publicity was the last thing her standing in the lodge could survive now.

"Whut hit cawst me to git you to git back my money from dat Samson?" she voiced her interest.

"Aint cawst nothin'—twel I gits de money—'cep'n my 'spenses. You jes' tell dem ba'becue-stan' boys to lemme charge my eatin'-vittles to you couple of days while I's gittin' yo' hund'ed back. Den you pays me ten cents on de dollar *when* I gits hit."

Amanuensis had not heard anything so reasonable since she last listened to Samson. "Boy, you's on," she accepted.

COLUMBUS' head whirled pleasantly. Going around with himself this way kept him associating with a smart man all the time. He had been detecting little more than a week, and already he had so many clients he could barely keep them and their business separated. This case had four sides to it now—with Columbus engaged as confidential representative for each of the four!

Yet here, it began vaguely to appear to him, lay the beginnings of a new kind of traffic jam. With four clients, he had to produce fourfold and conflicting results or his meal-tickets got canceled.

AN interview with Samson G. Bates further clouded his condition and undermined his confidence in himself. Samson sat in a big chair behind a big cigar and made smoke and listened contemptuously.

"So *you* thinks I should hand back dem hund'ed dollars I gits on bus'ness deal I makes in broad daylight sellin' s'curities to a lodge lady wid both her eyes open?" Mr. Bates summarized Mr. Collins' demands.

It really did not look so reasonable, somehow, when Samson stated it. Columbus fingered his star—for bravery—and indicated that he had once held such an opinion.

Samson shifted nervously then—as usual, when the badge became thus emphasized. Funny the way it upset him—just a little badge like that.

But the upset didn't last. "Boy," rumbled the restored Samson impressively, "I deals wid big business an' aint in'sted in small deals, but I tells you dis: de less you talks 'bout refundin' money, de less folks wonders is you git drap' on yo' funny-lookin' haid when you wuz li'l an' stunt yo' brains. Furdermo', as a detective you is hereby fired!"

Columbus found himself outside in a state of dissatisfaction. That he was not alone in that condition was shortly established by the appearance of Frisco Johnson from behind a billboard, intent on filing further complaints about Columbus' service.

"Done cut off yo' credit at de ba'becue stan'," announced Mr. Johnson firmly and sourly. "I hires you to watch Samson G. Bates fo' me, an' all you does is git dar after Samson done git de money I wuz after. You's fired!"

Again, through utterance of a familiar sentence, the bread-line shrank back two days nearer to Columbus. And Frisco departed without sign of reconsidering.

Right here the Johnson family became positively monotonous—for Judy was next blocking his road to barbecue with: "Whut is *I* git out of all dem free vittles you keeps lappin' up over at de ba'becue-stan'?"

"Gits me shadderin' yo' husban' Frisco," Columbus offered weakly in rebuttal. "Watchin' dat boy round women would make a centipede send out fo' mo' feet."

"Hmph! Is dat huccome he huggin' 'Manuensis Jones when I sees him las'? Whut he huggin', den, boy—her or her hund'ed dollars?"

Force of habit alone kept Columbus active in Frisco's behalf. "He jes' lookin' fo' good place set her down," he improvised.

"He aint look fur when he see me comin'."

"Naw'm—dat huccome she git so mad: he drap her."

"Yeah, an' dat huccome I draps *you!*" Columbus heard the now familiar words indicating that he had lost yet another client. "Draps yo' credit at de ba'becue too! Doctuhs says brains works best on empty stomach: heah whar *you* gits brainy an' I gits a suitcase—or Frisco got to out-talk me wid Cun'l Bob 'bout dem chickens!"

THREE days later Columbus sat on the windward side of Henry Roebuck's barbecue-stand and absorbed what nourishment he could from the breeze passing over its kitchen. He had just one client left,—Amanuensis,—and she wasn't putting out expense-money any more. Not until Columbus showed her a full refund from Samson G. Bates, who was reliably reputed never to refund anything!

On the Johnson porch opposite, a discreet

and forgiven Frisco added to Columbus' anguish by eating a pork-chop noisily and prominently before his eyes. On the floor beside Frisco a large new yellow pasteboard suitcase explained everything, including his continued health, freedom and restoration to citizenship.

It was while suffering thus that Columbus discharged one aphorism for lack of evidence, but proved another to the hilt. That hunger was the best sauce had become a purely academic matter with Columbus—he had nothing on which to pour sauce. But Judy's statement about a boy's mind working better on an empty stomach began blending now into proof of the ancient adage that necessity is the mother of invention. For so Columbus discovered now: no full-fed detective might have recalled and developed what came flashing to his rescue: that as a paid-in-full graduate he was entitled to service, to free professional advice from his school as to how to proceed in getting back the hundred from Samson for Amanuensis.

Which rift of sunlight, however, was instantly succeeded by blacker gloom: Columbus didn't have a stamp, or two cents, or a line of credit at a strange post office. Things suggested themselves, it seemed, only to crush him in a new place. Despairingly he took off his hat and held it bottom-upward in his left hand while he mopped mournfully with his right at a brow overheated from the overwork going on behind it.

And then and thus it was that Samson G. Bates, jovially homebound from robbing additional widows and orphans in a big broad-gauged way, unwittingly planted for himself the seeds of an unforgettable hour by large-heartedly dropping three cents into Columbus' outstretched hat.

Columbus swallowed the insult and set up the all-time record from the Roebuck barbecue-stand to the United States post office, from which latter point there issued on the night mail an urgent appeal to the Cosmogenic School of Detecting and Barber College at Birmingham, summed up in Columbus' complicated first sentence therein as:

"How does you go bout gittin a hundred dollars back from a boy what got it away from one of yorE cliunts before another cliunt coould get it away from the ladY what haD it all the time?" And closing with the fervent appeal: *"Wire answer. Situwation desprate."*

BEGINNING with long before its opening the next morning Detective Columbus Collins hung around the local telegraph office like a creditor around a tricky bankrupt. It was a relief to more than Columbus, therefore, when the wires finally spoke in his case.

"Here you are, boy—thirty cents charges, collect," the manager broke the glad tidings.

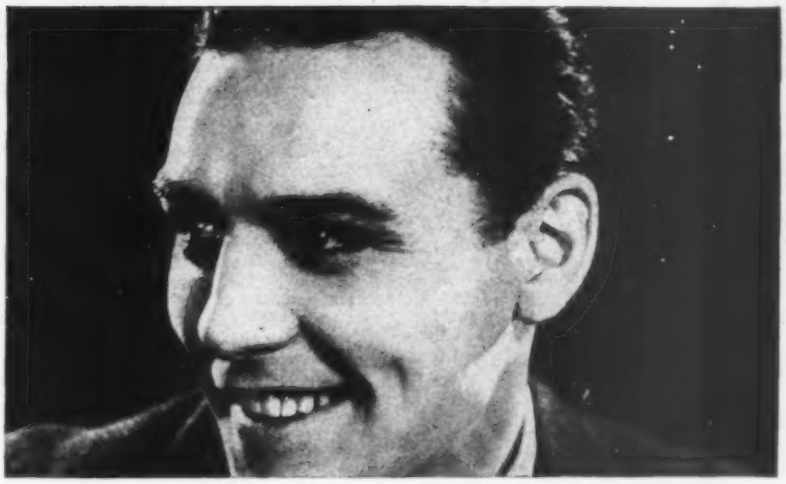
Columbus cheered at the first three words—and collapsed like a shot horse at the last three. Somebody was all the time offering him help with a string tied to it—and then pulling the string!

"B-b-bawss," stammered the *Sherlock* of Demopolis, "is automobiles a nickel apiece, I caint buy free air fo' de tires. I aint got no thutty centses. All you c'n do wid dat telegraph, den, is use hit fo' my tombstone after I stahves to death tomorrer, 'count hit already got my name on hit."

But then the telegraph man became endowed with a halo and sprouted golden wings in the eyes of Columbus. A harp all but materialized in his hands as he slid the message along the counter with a nonchalant: "All right. Sign here. We collect from the sender in that case."

Eagerly the starved but relieved Columbus tore open the envelope. Within it would be the words of wisdom to release him from bondage and fill him once more with barbecue. With glistening eyes he read:

"GET SOMETHING ON HIM, THEN THREATEN EXPOSURE TO GET ACTION."



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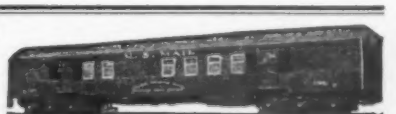
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Again the string had been pulled! It was easy—*if* you had something on him. But there lay the trouble: so far Columbus had nothing on Samson that could be made public. The Amanuensis matter was not available in its present state for use as a lever through threatened publicity.

So, "Git somep'n on him!" quoted Columbus bitterly to himself. "Yeah, dat's easy—git somep'n on him. An' I pays three cents fo' *dat!*"

Amanuensis rounded the corner to add to Columbus' calamities.

"Big Foots," she addressed her private detective publicly, "whut you gwine do 'bout dat hund'ed? You's strawng on eatin', twel I stops you, but whar at de money?"

"You gits de money," Columbus promised feebly.

"I better—or hit's yo' las' day livin'!" Amanuensis left her Thought-for-the-Day with him before passing grimly on.

And with her passing, his view of the interior of the barbecue-stand was painfully improved—to the extent of seeing Samson G. Bates dining diligently within. A cruel sight it was; yet it led his mind logically from food to Samson—to Samson's peculiarities about barbecue, and bridges, and—blanching before badges.

Thus, suddenly, again Judy was right! Columbus' stomach simply hadn't been empty enough before! For now an idea was born! Above an absolute digestive vacuum his brain was working at last!

Resolutely Columbus pulled himself together as he finished the timely task of putting two and two together so that they totaled five. Samson G. Bates, within the barbecue-stand, was already wielding a final napkin, laying a brown beringed hand upon a check big enough to cover feeding a starving sleuth for days. In a minute he would be upon the sidewalk. It was Columbus' big moment—now or never.

So as Samson stepped forth, Columbus confronted him, like the *Ancient Mariner,* holding him with his glittering hungry eye.

"Big boy," he conquered the tremor in his voice, "you done e't yo' las' meal outside de jail-house—'less'n you listens to me!"

Samson paused to petrify Columbus with a glare. But glares no longer counted with anyone as hungry as Columbus. He continued instead: "I jes' finish understandin' all I knows 'bout you las' week. Dey wuz a witness, too, when you done hit, whut you aint know 'bout. I got de goods on you fo' fair. You got jes' one houah to make yo'se'f right wid me, or I tells de world whut you done las' week!"

"Huh!" Samson was scornful. "Cain't nobody do nothin' 'count me sellin' dem s'curities to Mis' Jones fo' her lodge. She got both eyes wide open when she buy 'em, aint she?"

"Aint talkin' 'bout dat! Hit's dat *other* thing I gwine git you fo' if you aint come clean wid me!"

Samson gazed pityingly upon the splay-footed sleuth, hesitating only momentarily before the perturbing sight of his shiny badge before he finally deigned a deep-voiced: "Roll yo' hoop, li'l Big Foots! Roll yo' hoop on 'way from heah befo' I steps on you!"

And again it was Columbus' move, while the darkness of foodless defeat came upon him as he despairingly watched the rotund back of Mr. Bates recede up Baptist Hill.

ON a stool in Henry Roebuck's barbecue-stand that evening, being personally waited upon by its perspiring proprietor, Detective Columbus Collins dined copiously beside a guest and former client rolled in one, otherwise Frisco Johnson. From time to time Mr. Collins' hands moved first to his easterly and then to his westerly trousers pockets, that he might feel reassuringly the wadded greenbacks therein. Following which he urged anew upon the gorging Mr. Johnson a further order of barbecue, a more liberal portion of ham and eggs.

"Sho feels good to be eatin' ag'in," Columbus voiced his current views.

"Splanify yo'se'f, Big Foots, 'splanify yo'se'f," interjected Frisco, under the pressure of curiosity.

"Well," continued Columbus, "after I tells Samson I got de goods on him, an' he aint pay no 'tention to me, he walk off couple 'f blocks—thinkin'-like. Den he come gallopin' back in a big sweat an' staht shellin' out money!"

"Money?"

"A hund'ed dollars fo' Mis' Jones—an' fawty mo' fo' me whut I tacks on while he's feelin' like hit, so she aint have pay me my c'mission out de hund'ed—dat's de *li'l* roll I's carryin' in *dis* pocket—"

"De *'li'l roll!'"* quoted Columbus' pop-eyed guest. "You got *two* rolls money? Whut you *git* on Samson make him fawk over so fast?"

Columbus' grin widened reminiscently, connecting both ears.

"Boy," he chuckled, "you got ax *Samson* dat. All I knows is de rest—"

"Ax *Samson?* Aint you say you got de goods on him whut make him give you back 'Manuensis' hund'ed?"

"Yeah, but *I* aint know whut dey wuz; I jes' git so hongry dat my brains works twel dey figures out dat is he git nervous as he do ev'y time he see po-lice badge, like mine, dey's 'bleeged to be somep'n dat he's skeered'll git out on him. So I—"

Frisco arose in admiration. "Boy," he queried respectfully, "is you mean you jes' *bluffs* dat Samson into handin' you back hund'ed an' fawty dollars?"

"De li'l roll, yes," admitted Columbus modestly if incompletely. "De dee-tective book, Lesson Fo', say dat if you aint got nothin' on a boy, heap of times whut he *think* you got on him'll git action jes' as good!"

But the semi-stunned Frisco came back for more; there were two rolls of money in Columbus' newly bulging pockets; and the second was unexplained yet.

"Huccome I git dat other bigges' wad of money?" repeated Columbus easily when Frisco's curiosity had been further expressed. "Well, dat de funny paht—an' whar-at *you* fin'lly gits in de clear. Gittin' dat refund from Samson so easy kinder 'stonish me, an' I kinder step back an' my badge shows ag'in—an' *dawggone!* Hit jes' show dee-tectives good as me is jes' natu'ally *bawn* dat way!"

"Den whut?" begged the bursting Frisco. "How you git so good?"

"Dat Samson staht shellin' out money to me *ag'in*—whut in dis big roll! Fo' keepin' my mouth shet, he say, 'bout *somep'n else* I aint even know 'bout—twel he tell me!"

"Somep'n *whut?"*

"Somep'n whut cl'ar you, Frisco: *Samson* empty Cun'l Bob's henhouse so fast widout no fuss an' feathers. He think I know dat too an' is flashin' de badge on him ag'in fo' *mo'* money! Dat huccome dis bigges' roll!"

"S-S-Samson empty Cun'l Bob's chicken-house?" stammered Frisco. "Why, Samson aint mess wid nothin' but big deals—quick an' quiet, wid brains in 'em."

"Brains in dis," maintained Columbus admiringly above his wealth. "You think a fool would ever thunk up whut Samson done: sprayin' dem chickens wid chlorofawm so dey jes' drap off de roost into he sack sound asleep, quick an' quiet?"

THE MURDER IN THE STORM

(Continued from page 68)

"I do not mean physically, Mr. Hurme, but didn't you notice her footsteps?"

"Perhaps subconsciously. I retain the impression that she went at once in the direction of the kitchen."

"No further sounds reached you?"

"None."

"Could you have heard the kitchen door close?"

"I doubt it, sir. It is a quiet door, and at quite a distance from where I was sitting. I heard nothing further." Mr. Hurme paused briefly before adding: "It was about a quarter of an hour later that I found her."

Valcour successfully repressed a slight start. His manner remained casual. "Was she alone when you found her, Mr. Hurme?"

"Yes. I had turned out the light in the library, a standing lamp near my reading-chair. That made the entrance hall rather dark, and I stumbled against Alice as I started to go upstairs."

"But didn't you notice the sound of the shot?"

"Not to my knowledge, sir."

"Was there a fire on the hearth of the entrance hall?"

"Quite a fresh one. It had grown a little chill, and I touched it off, I recall, perhaps five or ten minutes before Alice came in."

Valcour recalled the crackling, the sharp *pops* of the wood. That might have accounted, of course.

"When you stumbled, Mr. Hurme—then what did you do?"

"It's rather confused. I remember turning on the lights. Alice's face was toward me. Her eyes were closed, and I believed she had fainted. It did not occur to me that she had been shot until I knelt beside her, and my hand came in contact with some blood on her dress. It seemed incomprehensible. Such things always do."

"Did you lift her?"

"I called upstairs to my son. He came down and helped me. We carried Alice between us to the maid's room."

"And during that time—Mrs. Hurme?"

"Vera was in her room. I met her in the hallway coming out of it, just as I was going to mine. I requested her to telephone for Dr. Harlan, and she did so."

"Have you any idea of how it happened?"

"None."

"Or of why it should have happened?"

"None."

Valcour stood up. "Would you prefer notifying your son of Mrs. Hurme's death," he said, "or shall I?"

Mr. Hurme remained quite impassive. He coughed once, his little hacking cough. "I regret that my son is intoxicated," he said. "He is lying on his bed in a stupor."

"I see," said Valcour thoughtfully.

"Yes." Mr. Hurme's voice trailed off into stillness. "I was quite certain, Mr. Valcour, that you would see."

Chapter Seventeen

SHADOWS were coming toward Alice Tribeau out of the corners of the room. They met above her and brooded heavily like a thick dark cloud. She couldn't see the ceiling through them, and there was something there that it was essential for her to see. There was writing on the ceiling just as

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once, a long time ago, there had been some writing on a wall. . . . .

In the center of the room was one shadow that did not float and join the others. It stood still and looked at her, and she was annoyed because she couldn't stare back. She couldn't stare because her eyes were closed, and it was more of a bother, rather than an impossibility, to open them.

Alice Tribeau had a superstition about shadows; she felt that their influence was mildly maleficent, and to safeguard against it she usually knocked on wood. It wasn't safe to stay under a shadow and not knock wood, but she felt so incredibly lazy and preferred a mild dose of possible maleficence to any actual exertion. Anyway, the shadow was gone. It was gone entirely, and she could see what the writing was; it was a single word that danced about upon the ceiling's cream-colored plaster—*Vera*. . . . . Why should she see Vera's name written on the ceiling?

Alice Tribeau felt a little scared, the way she did in dreams. She wished she would wake up. Certain things about this dream were silly and wrong; going to bed with her new green dress on, for instance. Vera would be sore about it if she found it out.

She opened her eyes definitely. It was her room, all right, and she was alone. But she was dressed. And her shoulder hurt her. If the green dress still being on her were a fact, a tangible fact hanging over from her dream, mightn't some of the other things have been facts, not dreams at all?

She grew terribly confused and stumbled out of bed. She met no one in the dim dark hall. The atmosphere of that hall had always frightened her. At present it terrorized her, and she started to run. She went, as one of its deeper shadows, down the hall's length, and opened the door into Vera's room. Dr. Harlan was lifting a sheet, and under that sheet—

Somebody said something to her.

She screamed.

"MY dear child!" Valcour was genuinely concerned. "What a pity—this further shock—"

He placed an arm protectingly about Alice Tribeau's shoulder and led her immediately out of Vera's room, back through the terrifying hall and into the maid's room, where he insisted upon her lying down again upon the bed.

Dr. Harlan had followed them and was standing in the doorway. His own forehead was moist, and he was considerably unnerved. And just behind him, more dimly seen, was the patrician face of Mr. Hurme.

"I really ought to give her a hypodermic," Dr. Harlan was saying.

"No," came with difficulty from Alice Tribeau's lips, and her body went in for an extraordinary faint tremor that was all the more impressive because of its slightness.

Valcour stared sharply at her with deliberately searching eyes. His manner became brisk, wholesome and friendly.

"Suppose you leave Miss Tribeau and myself alone for a little while, Doctor?" he said. "I'll sit here and try to talk her to sleep. You've no idea of the number of people I've successfully talked off to sleep. You'd never suspect it, but I'm really very soothing."

Dr. Harlan managed a faint smile. "You must do nothing to alarm her further."

"Why, there is nothing to be alarmed about, Doctor—nothing at all."

Dr. Harlan turned and started away. As for the white and patrician features of Mr. Hurme, they had already gone. . . . .

Valcour pulled a chair up quite close to the bed and sat down. He took out a package of cigarettes.

"Will smoking bother you?" he said.

The question surprised her and tugged gently at her scattered interests. It was very

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novel to be asked if anything annoyed her or not, by an expensively dressed gentleman.

"No, it wont," she said.

Valcour lighted a cigarette.

"Whereabouts was this dance held which you went to tonight?" he asked.

"Down to the Corners."

"You got there early, didn't you?"

"After the dishes."

"After eight-thirty, say?"

"Yes sir."

Valcour smiled amiably. "I've always wanted to attend the dances up here," he said. "Sometime I shall. I am very fond of dancing, and once won a prize for being the world's worst dancer. Which orchestra was playing?"

"Harry Daylo's."

"Good?"

"Swell."

"Who's he got playing traps for him now—that dark-haired chap?"

"I guess you mean Buster Detton?"

"Yes. He's very clever. I heard him at the school commencement."

"He's swell."

"Who took you?"

"Harry Beaudrez. We're going together."

"Really? Well, well—is it too early to offer best wishes?"

She was feeling better. That tight sense of impending dread had loosened a bit of its grip. Somewhere, way back in her head, was a lifted sheet, and under it— She only flicked the picture with a mental glance and clung desperately to these soothing commonplaces. "Well, maybe not," she said.

"Then permit me to!"

"Yes sir."

"I shouldn't wonder but that like all young engaged couples, you two have your quarrels."

"I'll say."

"But they're never very serious."

"They're fun."

"The making-up part afterwards?"

"Yes."

"Was the quarrel you had tonight a real good one?"

"Sort of."

"It was about some one, wasn't it?"

"Yes sir. They're always about some one."

"Always the same person?"

"Oh, no sir."

"And tonight's was about—"

"Oh, I couldn't say."

"Well, you don't have to. You see, I'm something of a fortune-teller; in fact, you'd be astonished at the things I can do with tea-leaves! The quarrel was about Mrs. Hurme, wasn't it? But of course Harry Beaudrez was only teasing."

"He was just being hateful, and didn't mean anything."

VALCOUR flicked his line a little closer toward center. "He was saying, wasn't he, how much better Mrs. Hurme looked in her own clothes than you did?"

"How did you know?" she said, and wondered whether he had been serious about the tea-leaves and not kidding, whether he really could— "You wasn't there."

He smiled amiably, and said: "I warned you I was occult. Of course you didn't let him get away with anything like that?"

"I'll say I didn't. I asked him why he didn't play around with her, then, instead of me. Can you imagine it?"

"And what did he say?"

"Oh, I couldn't tell."

"Of course you can. We know he was only fooling."

"Sure he was only fooling. He'd be crazy if he wasn't."

"He said?"

"He said he had."

Valcour said nothing for almost a full minute. He stared at Alice Tribeau, but he wasn't seeing Alice Tribeau; he was seeing Vera, snatching at passion clandestinely. Vera and the strong, handsome young man who owned a dairy farm.

"Tell me," he said gently, "did young Beaudrez start home with you when you left?"

"No, he didn't. I slipped out and left him to look for me. He'd feel foolish when he couldn't find me."

"Of course; the joke would then be on him."

"Yes sir."

"When you got back to the house, here, did you go right into the kitchen?"

"Yes sir."

"It's a lucky thing you did, isn't it?"

A SLIGHT cunning suffused the fright in her eyes.

"Lucky?"

"Yes—it's a lucky thing you stopped Mrs. Hurme from using the wrong bottle."

"I didn't say anything about a bottle."

"I know you didn't. But I know all about it. Mrs. Hurme told me all about it herself—about her fixing Mr. Hurme's tonic and having accidentally got hold of the wrong bottle."

"I didn't say it."

"And the bottle she had accidentally got hold of contained poison."

"I didn't say it. She told you."

"Yes, yes, I've admitted it was she who told me." Valcour was very soothing. "No one could question your loyalty to her a bit. Did she promise you money to keep quiet about it?"

"She's given me money now and then."

"I see—when you'd receive letters that were meant for her but were addressed to you?"

Valcour knew from repeated observation that the mechanics of any intrigue were as stabilized and as easy to reel off as a roll on a player-piano.

"She'd give me fifty cents apiece for them."

"Well, when you stopped her from using the wrong bottle, didn't she promise you anything if you'd say nothing about it?"

Her eyes grew frightened, and he barely heard her say: "Five hundred dollars."

His own eyes were a little stern as he said: "I see."

"It made me think, because she offered me so much, that maybe—"

He echoed her "maybe" and said: "What did she do with the bottle that had poison in it?"

"She cleaned up the pieces."

"It was smashed?"

"Yes. It fell right out of her fingers when I came into the kitchen. I guess I startled her. It fell right out of her fingers into the sink and broke." Her voice was vague again, low again: "I saw the label and knew it was poison from the picture of the skull on it."

"You liked Mrs. Hurme a lot, didn't you?"

"Yes sir, a whole lot."

"Well, it's a nasty thing to say, but I think that your having seen her like that with the bottle was why she shot you."

Alice's body went limp again.

"She—Mrs. Hurme—*she* shot me?"

"Didn't she?"

"I don't know—but she couldn't have—"

"Didn't you see anything, the gun, some movement that must have warned you it was going to happen?"

The little tremors started in once more.

"How could I?" she said.

Valcour's voice continued gentle. "Why couldn't you?"

"The lights were out."

She offered the explanation as if it cleared up the whole, to her, tiresome affair, as if it absolved her from any further participation in it at all. Valcour detected the flavor of the subject's tiresomeness in her manner, and decided that it had become so simply because of some matter that had superseded it immeasurably in her interest. One didn't get offered five hundred dollars, one didn't get shot at in the dark and then grow bored with the business within a few hours, unless the strength of some newer emotion relegated the incident to a place of comparative negligence.

Alice Tribeau turned her eyes restlessly toward the doorway. She was indifferent to everything except one thing, and her mind beat about that single thing as a moth beats against a bright and scorching light, a light so bright that it blinded rather than aided her to see. The expensively dressed gentleman was speaking again.

"Mrs. Hurme stayed in the kitchen, didn't she, when you left her to go upstairs?"

"Yes."

"And the light was on in the kitchen?"

"Why, yes. She had to see."

"But you said the lights were out when you were shot."

"There wasn't any lights on in the dining-room or sitting-room. It was dark."

"Then the door between the kitchen and the dining-room was closed?"

"Yes."

"Did you close it yourself as you left the kitchen?"

"No, I didn't. She was right by the door, and she held it open for me."

"Did you see her close the door?"

"No, I didn't. My back was turned, but I heard it close."

"Couldn't you see anything in the dining-room at all?"

"Just a little. You know how it is in a room at night. Everything was dark, but some things were darker than others."

"How were you shot"

"I don't know. My foot caught in that rug between the dining-room and the sitting-room, and I tripped. I fell down on my knees and something hit me hard on the shoulder. That's all I know."

But it wasn't, Valcour felt certain, all she knew.

Her eyes still clung to the doorway. Her limpness had given way to lethargy. Her head ached terrifically, and her eyes felt hot and painful.

TWO pictures presented themselves to Valcour. For each there was the same background: a darkened room with Alice Tribeau tripped and fallen on her knees. To complete the first picture there was Vera shutting the dining-room door, not from the kitchen side, but from the dining-room side, and fastening in her eyes Alice Tribeau's retreating back just as the light from the kitchen was blotted out; there was Vera with a gun in her hand, walking softly after Alice Tribeau, hearing her fall, shooting her; there was Vera groping in the darkness and lifting Alice Tribeau, carrying her through the living-room into the palish murk of the entrance hall, and hearing the faint movements made by Mr. Hurme as he rose from his reading-chair in the library beyond the alcove made by the stairs; there was Vera letting Alice Tribeau down to the floor by the foot of the stairs, running softly up those stairs and putting the gun somewhere in her room, then waiting to be told that Alice Tribeau was shot, that Alice Tribeau was dead.

The second completing of the picture was vivid too; Vera was out of it entirely. Vera was back in the kitchen with the door shut, eating a sandwich and swearing at the miscarriage of her plan to poison Mr. Hurme. It was Mr. Hurme who was standing quite still in the murk of the entrance hall, the gun in his hand trained toward the dark dining-room that was lighted momentarily as Alice Tribeau came into it from the kitchen; Alice Tribeau in one of Vera's dresses, in obscurity, in darkness. The same shooting, the carrying, the same mechanics, but with Vera startling him, with Mr. Hurme standing at a distance, a black figure

melting into black, and watching Vera discover what he had thought was the body of Vera. . . . .

"What is the first thing you remember after you tripped?" Valcour said.

"I guess it was waking up here." She shook her head impatiently. "I don't remember anything much very well. Dr. Harlan and Mr. Will was here. Mr. Will said I had been shot at. That scared me so I guess I didn't know anything for a while. Then I guess I heard some one say it was the same one—something about the same one doing the same thing to Mrs. Hurme as to me. It didn't mean anything until I went into Mrs. Hurme's room and saw her dead under a sheet on the bed. And even then it didn't mean anything—anything I can say now. I know, but I can't say it—this sounds crazy —because I don't know—it scares me. I've been feeling terrible ever since seeing her under that sheet. I've been scared ever since, and I want to get out of here."

Valcour spoke gently. "Why?" he said.

"Because I knew something that I don't know now." She tried to be quite lucid, quite clear. "My head hurts me so much." She turned hazy screwed-up eyes directly on Valcour. "I'm scared of being shot at again."

"But why?"

"For what I know."

Her emphasis on the *"know"* was very slight. Her eyes closed drowsily, not so much from lassitude as from nervous reaction. Valcour was very careful not to move at all. He watched the eyelids droop and raise, droop again, raise again, like water under uneven pressure in a tube, close—stay closed—and then he became aware of Dr. Harlan standing in the shadows beyond the opened door. Dr. Harlan was beckoning to him. He stood up very quietly, and went out into the hall.

Chapter Eighteen

"I'VE been standing out here and listening," Dr. Harlan said. "I was afraid to disturb you if I came in. It might have upset Alice, and you wouldn't have found out the things you wanted to know."

"Do you think she'll rest now for a while, Doctor?"

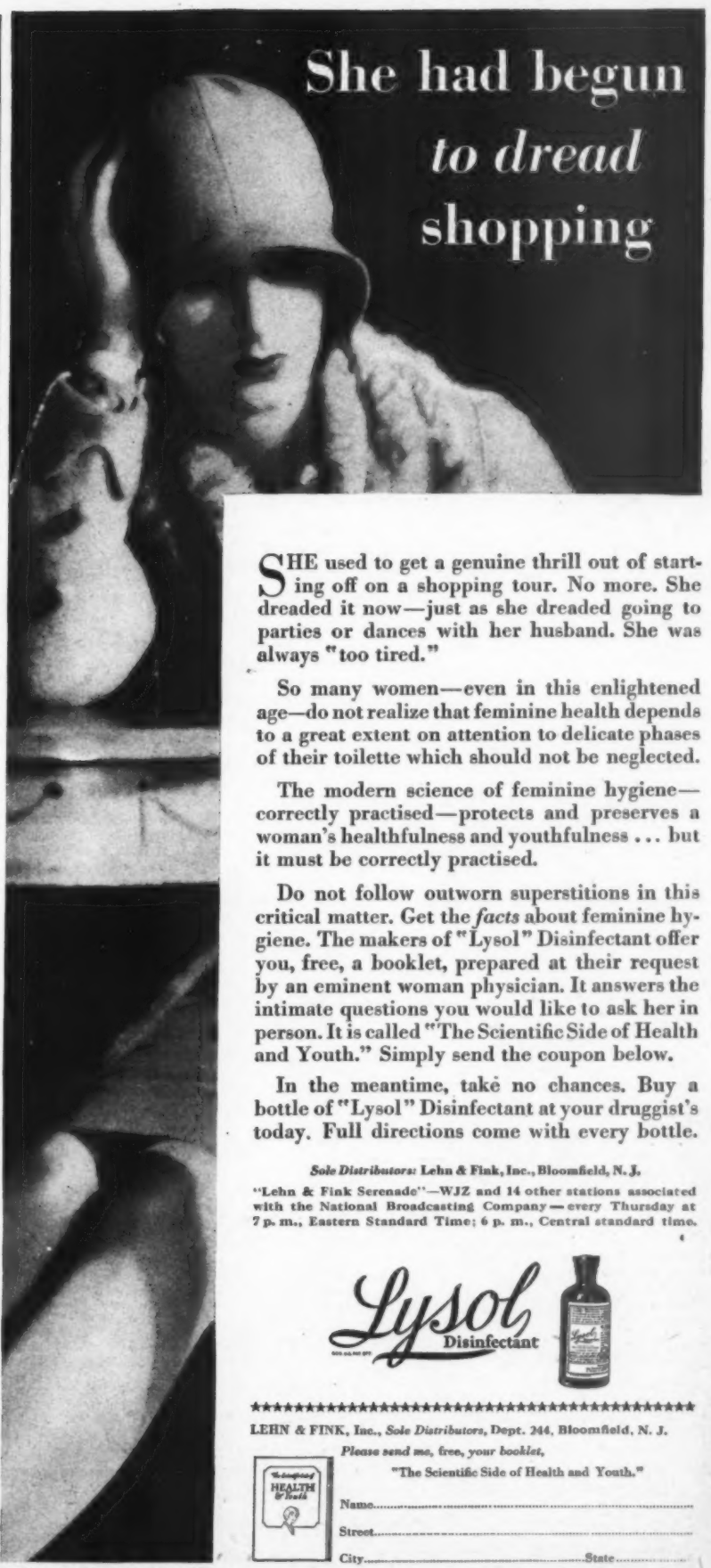
They had moved along the hallway, and both their voices were very low.

"Yes. She's pretty well exhausted." Dr. Harlan stopped by the stair well and said: "Do you honestly think that Vera shot her?"

"To be perfectly frank with you, I don't know. I believe it's logical that she should have. The thing that bothers me is that blank spot in Alice Tribeau's memory. I think it has something to do with the person who shot her and—and here is where my theory collapses—with the person who killed Mrs. Hurme. Do you think her loss of memory on that point is genuine?"

"Oh, yes. I sha'n't go in for medical terms, but the shock of seeing Vera's body could have done it. I feel as you do, that she really knows—if not the absolute identity—at least the sex of the person who shot her. If it were a man, you see—" Dr. Harlan shrugged, and divided his stare equally between the door to Will's room and to Mr. Hurme's. "The point is, she feels pretty positive he's the man who killed Vera too, and I think it's driving her crazy with fright. She can't recall any impression of the business in clear detail. Certain brain-cells are temporarily paralyzed, the ones she would use to remember that particular incident with. The paralysis may wear off suddenly, or it may take some time. It may never wear off." Dr. Harlan's voice went into the thinnest whisper. "If she should name him, of course, we'd know definitely who killed Vera."

Valcour's face was inscrutable. "Our work is just beginning, Doctor," he said. "We have questioned the people; and now, if you



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will forgive the setness of the statement, we must question the scene of the crime."

Dr. Harlan looked a little blank. "You mean clues?" he said.

"I prefer to think of them as evidence. A case cannot be presented to the grand jury on theory alone. Come with me, please. I shall want you as a witness."

THEY started moving along the hall.

"How do you mean, a witness?"

"A corroborative witness, Doctor." They started to descend the curving stairs. "I am looking beyond the moment when it will be possible to accuse the murderer. I am looking toward the time when he will stand accused before the court, and I shall have to make statements from the witness-box concerning the evidence. You can see that my single testimony might be considered as fallible, but with another witness—yourself—to corroborate what I may say—"

Dr. Harlan stopped as they reached the foot of the stairs. "I suppose I ought to realize all these things," he said, "but it's my first case. I've never been mixed up with a homicide before. Things like that don't happen much up here. It's been drownings, mostly, and hunting accidents. . . . . There are all sorts of things to be taken into consideration, aren't there?"

Valcour switched on a floor-lamp, and Dr. Harlan moved closer to its comforting pool of light.

"Yes, Doctor, all sorts of things. The very type of man we're dealing with is perhaps our greatest stumbling-block."

"Why?"

"Well, he's certainly above the average intelligence level of the criminal class, and probably realizes the pitiable fallacy of the ancient axiom that murder will out. Any normal reader of newspaper statistics knows that nowadays murder rarely outs, that the machinery of modern justice is so complex that crime has a habit of dying in a shroud of mystery from inanition. I don't imagine, Doctor, that one out of a hundred cases are brought to trial without the prosecutor having first obtained a confession—which is usually a true confession, no matter how fervently it may later be repudiated—or else without some accomplice having turned state's evidence. And I have a feeling that the man we're after will never confess, that we'll have to prove our case against him to the hilt. Just step over here and take a look at this window, Doctor."

They went to the window that had been broken.

"It's smashed."

"Yes, Doctor. Please observe the way the pieces of broken glass lie on the floor. In your opinion, how was the window broken?"

"Why—I should say from the outside."

"That's right. It couldn't have been broken in any other way. You will be able, now, to swear to the fact." Valcour eyed the still falling snow. Its curtains streamed unbrokenly through the sullen night. "It would be useless to open the window and have you look for traces outside. Much snow has fallen since it was broken. Your testimony will be of value simply that the pane was smashed from the outside. Our next point is under the arch in the dining-room."

Valcour switched on lamps as they proceeded, and radiance advanced before them. He stopped under the archway and indicated the dull spot on the floor's polish.

"Do you mind kneeling, Doctor? The wax, wouldn't you say, has been recently wiped with a damp cloth, here where it is dull? Please observe those minute flecks. They are dried blood, and I have several samples of them in an envelope. It is my contention that this is the spot where Alice Tribeau fell when she was shot."

Dr. Harlan stood up and straightened his trouser-legs. "There's been a lot of lying going on here tonight," he said.

They went into the kitchen.

"From now on," Valcour said, "we are mutual explorers; let us see what we can find." He turned switches, and the kitchen was bright with light. He looked at once to the blackened beams, and a curious smile settled on his lips.

"See anything, Doctor?" he said.

Dr. Harlan stared up too. "Why, no—nothing unusual—"

"How about the snowshoes?"

"Why, they're there."

"Yes, but how many pairs?"

"Say—that's right! There were two pair, and now there's only one! Why,"—Dr. Harlan was visibly excited about this,—"it could mean anything—substantiate the presence of some stranger who had escaped—"

"Just so, Doctor. Let us see if we can find how this stranger was supposed to have escaped."

"But I don't understand. It's unreasonable—"

"Most. Here we are. Just come over here and take a look."

Dr. Harlan joined him before a northern window, where the drifts were lighter than they were on the southern side.

"Clever, isn't it?" said Valcour.

"I don't see anything. The window's closed."

"And that is what's clever. A man of lesser intelligence would have left the window standing open."

"Standing? Why should you say it had been open?"

"There's moisture along the sill here where the snow drifted in while he was, presumably, making his escape. As for tracks—" Valcour shrugged. "Blanket upon blanket of snow has fallen since he might have been presumed to have made tracks. I told you the man was smart."

"But I still don't see what's so smart about it."

"Why, he's got us now so that under clever examination, under oath, we can be forced to state that definite indications existed tending to prove that a man had escaped from this house."

"That's right. We couldn't prove a man didn't."

"No," said Valcour. "Unless we find the snowshoes."

DR. HARLAN stared at him queerly. "Are we going to look for them now?" he said.

"No, Doctor." Valcour turned out lights, and they left the kitchen. "We'll simply put them down on our list. It is Mrs. Hurme's room that we're immediately interested in."

They went along, their footsteps alone breaking the hush of the house and echoing wherever they crossed bare wood with the hollowness of a dreary drum. They went in silence up the curving stairs, and first along the dim dark hall to the maid's room. They assured themselves that Alice Tribeau was resting quietly. They went back to Vera's room; they went inside, and Valcour closed the door.

Neither could ignore the smooth-drawn sheet. They stared at it frankly, and Dr. Harlan seemed to be gripped by it as if it possessed some power unpleasantly hypnotic.

"Let's get on with this, Valcour," he said.

Valcour glanced at his watch. "It is after four o'clock," he said. "About three hours to daylight, I should say."

"Are you going to look for fingerprints, and stuff like that?"

"I don't think so, Doctor. There are probably dozens of prints here belonging to people who live in this house. Finding them wouldn't prove anything. Many normal reasons could be advanced for their being there. As for finding the fingerprints of any stranger, I'm not going to waste my time."

"What are you going to look for, then?"

"I'd like to find out what it was that the murderer was after."

Dr. Harlan went as far away from the bed as he could. He settled nervously on the edge of the chaise-longue. "Pretty tall order, isn't it?" he said.

Valcour was staring at the dead ashes in the fireplace. "Pretty tall," he said. "Do you know anything about ashes, Doctor?"

"Ashes?"

"The different appearance between wood and coal and paper ashes?"

"No. Why?"

"If you'll look at the hearth, you'll see that some papers have been burned in it—not the paper which was used to start the kindling, but papers which were burned after the fire had about gone out. They may have been what the man was after. He may have found them and have destroyed them at once. And perhaps they were only papers which Mrs. Hurme was herself destroying. We must remember that she had intended to leave in the morning." He added carefully: "Burnt papers suggest material for blackmail, of course."

"Vera was being blackmailed?"

FOR a moment Valcour looked evenly at Dr. Harlan. He wondered how much it would be wise to say. "No," he said, "I imagine that Mrs. Hurme was doing the blackmailing."

"But it's confusing—"

"All theoretical reasoning is confusing."

"She wouldn't have been blackmailing either—we might just as well speak plainly—Will or Mr. Hurme."

"I don't think she was."

"Then why should either of them destroy what you claim may have been proofs of blackmail, if the proofs were not dangerous to them?"

"Any number of reasons. We can't be specific as yet, but Cæsar had certain ideas about his wife. Why not about his son's wife too, if he had a son? —I don't remember, do you?"

"I haven't the slightest idea," said Dr. Harlan irritably.

"Few people have outside the fifth grade, or whatever grade it is that indulges in Cæsar."

"I don't see what you're driving at, unless you mean that Will or his father would destroy them to avoid publicity if the letters were found after her death, would want her to appear in as good a light as possible."

"Well, wouldn't they?"

"I guess they would."

Valcour took a poker and poked among the hot ashes. The poker struck something solid, and he began to push the ashes away.

"I want you to see this," he said. "Come over here, will you, please?"

Dr. Harlan went over and crouched down beside Valcour. "What have you found?"

"I think," said Valcour, "it's the gun."

It was the gun: a little automatic—caliber

FANNIE HURST has been to Hollywood during the very recent making of the talking version of her famous novel "Lummox," and she tells you the most surprising and fascinating things which are happening there now, in an article which we will publish next month—

"Hollywood—Hollywoodn't!" by Fannie Hurst

.25. Valcour hooked the poker into the trigger-guard, lifted it, and placed the gun gently onto a clean part of the hearthstone.

"I hope the rest of the cartridges were taken out," he said. "They must have been, or they would have exploded before now. We'll let it lie there until it cools off. It was a pretty shrewd type of mind that thought of that as a temporary hiding-place, Doctor."

Dr. Harlan stared almost angrily at the gun. "What on earth do you suppose made him hide it here for?" he said. He stood up, went back to the chaise-longue and sat stiffly on it again. "I'm getting old, Valcour. I can't stand these all-night rackets any more."

"Old?" Valcour smiled. "You're about thirty-five or -six, aren't you?"

"That's got nothing to do with it." There was no answering smile. Dr. Harlan's eyes gave up the effort of trying not to stare at the smooth-drawn sheet. It was such a novel and terrible mask for Vera, a mask that simplified tremendously so many things. "I wish you'd get on and finish up in here."

VALCOUR straightened up and stood looking around. His eyes came to rest on the bureau. He walked over and stared curiously at the little vermilion lacquered Chinese box standing there. Its barrel-shaped lock fascinated him. As with most things of Oriental manufacture it presented to the Occidental mind a faint air of mystery, of secrecy. He took a handkerchief from his pocket, and holding it between his fingertips and the box, lifted the box and shook it gently. It was quite light and apparently empty. Nothing rattled.

"What's that?" said Dr. Harlan.

"A Chinese box. Beautiful, isn't it?"

"Yes. Anything in it?"

Valcour did not answer at once. He was looking intently at the lock. "It would be quite a box for keeping letters in, private letters. Then its color is provocative. Don't you find that some colors are and some aren't?"

"I never thought of it."

"I feel there are colors that make you want to touch them, and others that you ignore completely. I'd never want to touch anything putty-colored, no matter how beautiful its shape, but I like to handle red. I suppose it subconsciously suggests warmth." Valcour took a jeweler's glass from his pocket and adjusted it. He stared through it at the barrel-shaped lock. "Yellow is touchable too. It seems a friendly color with a certain amount of affection in it. Green, strangely, isn't, except in its milder shades, and even then I'd rather admire than touch it. I take back what I said about fingerprints, by the way. There are some excellent ones on this box—and look! The lock has been forced."

Dr. Harlan came nervously to his feet. "Why not open the box and see what's inside?" he said.

"I will. Apparently there is nothing inside, but you never can tell about these Chinese boxes." Valcour delicately removed the lock, handling it as little as possible, and set it to one side. He opened the lid of the box. "You see?" he said.

Dr. Harlan was very close. "It's quite empty."

"The Chinese, Doctor, are curiously partial to secrets within secrets." With a lead-pencil Valcour compared the inner depth with the outer measurement of the box. The discrepancy was noticeably too great. He took a penknife from his pocket and opened a blade. "I think we've been luckier than the murderer," he said.

The dramatic climax of this fascinating mystery occurs in the ensuing installment—in the next, the October, issue.



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FOR THE GUMS

YOUR TEETH ARE ONLY AS HEALTHY AS YOUR GUMS



"Thank God! At last I'll be able to read and write."

HOW would you feel if you could not read the news of the world? No newspapers, magazines, books, letters, not even a danger sign or a warning notice? Somewhere near you is a grown person groping in the dark, in many ways helpless as a child, because he cannot read or write. You can bring sunlight into his darkened life. More than that, you may be the means of bringing him better health—even of saving his life.

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